

Public Notice: Termination of ICOADS Development Due to NOAA Budget Cuts
30 January 2012

ICOADS has operated for decades in the US as a partnership between NOAA—its Earth System Research Laboratory (ESRL) and the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC)—and the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), together with growing international contributions.

For budgetary reasons, stemming from pending large cuts at the NOAA Climate Program Office (CPO), ESRL Directors have determined that it is no longer feasible for its Physical Science Division (PSD) to continue supporting any further ICOADS work—effective immediately.

This immediate cessation of support by ESRL means the future of ICOADS is unclear. The program is working to transition some responsibilities to NCDC, but for the foreseeable future improvements to the historical time period are stopped. For the near-term, data access services of the existing Release 2.5 (1662-2007) will continue through NCAR and NCDC. Currently it is anticipated that:

- At this juncture there are no plans for any new major ICOADS delayed-mode updates or further Releases.
- “Preliminary” near-real-time updates of the observations and basic gridded monthly summary products will continue to be produced and served at NCAR for as long as current data flows remain unchanged.
- The ICOADS website (<http://icoads.noaa.gov/>), the project central information source, as hosted at PSD cannot be updated further. A future home for the extensive existing content (including documentation, software, and metadata) is under discussion.
- This situation extends to related websites currently hosted under the icoads.noaa.gov domain, including the international marine climatology workshops MARCDAT and CLIMAR, as well as the recently funded ICOADS Value-Added Database (IVAD) Project. The IVAD project is hinged on developments at ESRL, so it is likely this will be terminated.
- Regrettably moreover, there will be no staffing support for marine work or consultation from ESRL.

This situation suddenly became known to the project membership in December 2011, and we are very sorry about this development and for such short notice. We know it will have significant impacts on the quality of a wide range of scientific research. Please address any further questions or concerns to ESRL, NCDC, and/or higher-level NOAA management.