



Application Note

App. Note Number: 1019

Title: GOES Transmitting for Private Companies.

Description: This document describes how private companies can apply to use the GOES radio for data transmitting.

Product: GOES Radio
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Introduction:

The GOES Data Collection System (DCS) has extra capacity which can be made available to non-NOAA users for the collection from remote locations of environmental data provided that NOAA, another Federal agency, or a State or local government also has an interest in or a requirement for obtaining these data, and that no alternative commercial service exists. The source of the following information comes from the NOAA website. Any reference to specific sections can be found at: http://noaasis.noaa.gov/DCS/docs/DCPR_CS2_final_June09.pdf

General GOES DCS Information:

The GOES DCS is a system for collecting and transmitting data from remote platforms via a government owned geostationary satellite the primary purpose of which is the collection of environmental data, in particular meteorological, hydrological, and oceanic data.

On June 30, 1980, NOAA published in the Federal Register a revision to its regulations on the administration and operation of a GOES DCS. That revision established the NOAA policy that the GOES DCS would be made available to non-NOAA users who owned or operated platforms for the collection of environmental data required by or desired for the implementation of Federal programs or required by State or local governments. All users had to agree to permit NOAA and other Federal agencies free and open use of data collected. The regulations also established a priority order by which requests from non-NOAA users for access to DCS would be processed.

The regulations of June 30, 1980, did not clearly state whether private organizations could use the GOES DCS. **NOAA has interpreted its regulations so that it has permitted private organizations to use the GOES DCS provided that they had a Federal agency or State or local government sponsor for the particular collection of data.** These regulations now clarify this point by naming private organizations as eligible users of the GOES DCS provided that they meet all other conditions for access to the DCS. The top four federal agencies that sponsor private companies are: United States Geological Survey (USGS), US Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and the US Forrest Service.

Use of the GOES DCS:

(a) Use of the GOES DCS can be authorized only for the purpose of collecting environmental data. Environmental data as used here means observations and measurements of the physical, chemical or biological properties of the ocean, river, lakes, solid earth, and atmosphere (including space).

(b) The GOES DCS is not to be used for data collection where adequate private common carrier communications exist to provide the service. (Adequate is defined in terms of capacity, speed and reliability with respect to the particular use envisioned.) A user must document, with a request for use of the GOES DCS, why private common carrier communications are not adequate.

(c) A user must identify the Federal agency or State or local government which will benefit from the proposed collection of data. NOAA will confirm with the sponsoring Federal Agency, or State or local government, that these data required by, in support of or in furtherance of, a program conducted by the sponsoring agency or State or local government.

(d) User agencies and organizations will be admitted to system use with priority status as follows:

- (1) NOAA users or users whose data are required for implementation of NOAA programs.
- (2) Users whose data are desired to support NOAA programs.
- (3) Users whose data and/or use of the GOES DCS will further a program of an agency or department of the United States Government.
- (4) Users whose data are required by a State or local government of the United States.

(e) All users of the GOES DCS must use a data collection platform radio set whose technical characteristics conform to specifications established by NOAA. The message format must be as specified by NOAA.

(f) All users are responsible for all costs associated with the procurement and operation of these platforms, any confidential treatment of data under section 911.3 (listed on the website), and for the acquisition of these data from those platforms either directly from the satellite or from the NOAA GOES Data Collection Center at the Wallops CDA, at Wallops, Virginia.

(g) Design characteristics of the environmental data collection system on the spacecraft require that users conform to technical standards established by NOAA. See 911.5 on the website.

(h) NOAA will make every effort to maintain the GOES DCS in full operation at times subject to the availability of appropriations. NOAA will bear no responsibility for any losses as a result of the nonavailability of the DCS.

GOES DCS Use Agreement:

(a) Each user must have an agreement with NOAA to use the GOES DCS.

(b) These agreements will cover, but will not be limited to: (1) The period of time the agreement is valid and procedures for cancelling it, (2) conformance with ITU agreements and regulations; (3) required equipment standards, (4) standards of operation, (5) priorities for use, (6) reporting time and frequencies, (7) data formats, (8) data delivery systems and schedules, (9) user-borne costs, and (10) proprietary treatment of data.

(c) The representative of NOAA for evaluating use requests and concluding use agreements will be the Director of the Office of Satellite Data Processing and Distribution of the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service, except that in the case of agreements which involve foreign government agencies or requests for proprietary treatment of data, the concurrence of the NOAA Assistant Administrator for Satellites will be obtained.

How to Submit an Agreement:

Use of the GOES Data Collection System is regulated, by law, to the collection of environmental data by U.S. federal, state, and local government agencies, and by international government agencies and research organizations with a U.S. government sponsor.

A prospective user must first apply for and be granted a System Use Agreement (SUA) by NESDIS, which is typically renewable every 5 years (1 year for manufacturers). Once the SUA has been approved and signed, the user must purchase equipment that has been certified to be compatible with the GOES DCS.

The application process is electronic and found only on the NOAA website. Here is the link address to the online application: <http://noaasis.noaa.gov/DCS/htmfiles/appnewsua.html>

Conclusion:

There are **no fees** for the application process and once approved, **no fees** for the use of the GOES DCS. All specifications for DCP's can be found at the following link:

http://noaasis.noaa.gov/DCS/docs/DCPR_CS2_final_June09.pdf

Additional information about GOES DCS use and regulations can be found at:

<http://noaasis.noaa.gov/DCS/docs/goesdcs.pdf>

The NOAA website has an abundance of information: <http://noaasis.noaa.gov/DCS/index.html>

Questions/Answers:

Q: How long does it take to get approved?

A: Depending on how urgent the need is, it could take from just a week or two, up to a month.

Q: Why doesn't the government charge for this service?

A: In order to be approved to use the GOES system you agree to make your data public. Your sponsor, or any other government agency, may have a need to view your data in the future.

Q: What information will I need to submit with an application?

A: The main information NOAA will look for is what environmental data will be sent, how often it will be sent, and who will be responsible for the technical aspects. See the online application for full details of what to submit with your application.