

Susan Buchanan - NOAA Federal

From: Susan Buchanan - NOAA Federal
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2019 10:31 AM
To: Freedman, Andrew
Cc: Lauren Gaches - NOAA Federal
Subject: Re: URGENT request for comment

"The NWS leadership team stands with the entire National Weather Service workforce and will continue to uphold the scientific integrity of the forecast process as it was skillfully applied by all NWS offices last week to ensure public safety, first and foremost." - National Weather Service Spokesperson

Andrew - I'd also like to directly address with you a couple of inaccuracies that the CWG continues to perpetuate:

1. The guidance that NWS leadership sent to the workforce about not engaging in social media debates during Hurricane Dorian had nothing to do with "not angering the president" as you keep reporting. Before your last published article on this topic, you asked me for a response and I told you, "NWS leadership sent this guidance to field staff so they (and the entire agency) could maintain operational focus on Dorian and other severe weather hazards without distraction." The guidance was in no way political, yet CWG continues to talk about it within context of not angering the president. I am asking you to stop this inaccurate reporting.

2. The Birmingham office issued their tweet in response to a large amount of partner and public inquiries they were receiving about potential impacts of Dorian to Alabama. At the time the Birmingham tweet was issued, the staff there was unaware of the POTUS remarks about Alabama, and so they were not responding directly to him. Please discontinue stating that BMX corrected the president, because it is untrue.

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Susan Buchanan
Director of Public Affairs
National Weather Service
301-427-9000

On Mon, Sep 9, 2019 at 8:48 AM Freedman, Andrew <Andrew.Freedman@washpost.com> wrote:
Understood and not ideal from my standpoint either. Am in midst of my commute too :(

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 9, 2019, at 8:40 AM, Susan Buchanan - NOAA Federal <susan.buchanan@noaa.gov> wrote:

CAUTION: EXTERNAL SENDER

Confirming receipt. I need a (reasonable) deadline. Would prefer that any response not just be stuck somewhere in an already-completed article. Thx, -S

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Susan Buchanan
Director of Public Affairs
National Weather Service
301-427-9000

On Mon, Sep 9, 2019 at 8:31 AM Freedman, Andrew <Andrew.Freedman@washpost.com> wrote:

Hi Susan and Lauren,

Do you have any stmt in response to Craig McClean's email that went out overnight, pasted below?

Story to run ASAP.

Thx,
Andrew

From: Craig McLean - NOAA Federal <craig.mclean@noaa.gov>
Subject: Hurricane Dorian and Exceptional Service
Date: September 8, 2019 at 9:55:45 PM PDT

Dear Colleagues,

The fierce storm we know as Hurricane Dorian has concluded its ferocious path through the Bahamas and along the US East Coast. Many of you have contributed to the excellent science that has underpinned the forecasts and current understanding of storms such as this one, which accelerated quite rapidly in intensity. The storm also presented challenges in track which improved with enhanced observations. We know that our collective work, from the scientists in the aircraft penetrating the storm, to the scientists deploying the glider picket line, to the modelers and folks working the physics of the storms, across OAR and in our CI's, and across all NOAA Lines, we are working the problem in order to give the NWS forecasters the best tools we possibly can to keep America and our neighbors safe. Thank you.

During the course of the storm, as I am sure you are aware, there were routine and exceptional expert forecasts, the best possible, issued by the NWS Forecasters. These are remarkable colleagues of ours, who receive our products, use them well, and provide the benefit of their own experience in announcing accurate forecasts accompanied by the distinction of all credible scientists -- they sign their work. As I'm sure you also know, there was a complex issue involving the President commenting on the path of the hurricane. The NWS Forecaster(s) corrected any public misunderstanding in an

expert and timely way, as they should. There followed, last Friday, an unsigned press release from "NOAA" that inappropriately and incorrectly contradicted the NWS forecaster. My understanding is that this intervention to contradict the forecaster was not based on science but on external factors including reputation and appearance, or simply put, political. Our NOAA Scientific Integrity Policy and Code of Scientific Conduct make clear that all NOAA employees shall approach all scientific activities with honesty, objectively, and completely, without allegiance to individuals, organizations, or ideology. The content of this press release is very concerning as it compromises the ability of NOAA to convey life-saving information necessary to avoid substantial and specific danger to public health and safety. If the public cannot trust our information, or we debase our forecaster's warnings and products, that specific danger arises.

You know that the value of our science is in the complexity of our understanding, our ability to convey that understanding to a wide audience of users of this information, and to establish and sustain the public trust in the truth and legitimacy of that information. Unfortunately, the press release of last Friday violated this trust and violated NOAA's policies of scientific integrity. In my role as Assistant Administrator for Research, and as I continue to administratively serve as Acting Chief Scientist, I am pursuing the potential violations of our NOAA Administrative Order on Scientific Integrity. Thankfully, we have such policies that are independently cited as among the best in the federal community, if not the best. Your NOAA and OAR management and leadership team believes in these policies and principles. I have a responsibility to pursue these truths. I will.

Thank you for your continued excellent work, and your trust. Carry on.

Craig

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