

1 **Surface Temperature Initiative**

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3 **Databank Working Group Terms of Reference**

4  
5 Effective: 8 June 2011

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7 *1. Initiative background*

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9 The Surface Temperature Initiative (STI), endorsed by the WMO Commission for  
10 Climatology at its 15<sup>th</sup> session, was launched at a meeting at the UK Met Office,  
11 Exeter, in September 2010. To meet the requirements placed on climate science in  
12 the 21st Century, it is necessary to create a suite of high quality and high resolution  
13 data-products, with openness, transparency, verification, and user tools. Such a  
14 range of estimates, and common framework, would aid decision-making at national  
15 and international scales and inform adaptation strategies. The initiative should  
16 encompass: data rescue and digitisation; an open, transparent and comprehensive  
17 databank with versioning and provenance tracking; a data-portal for multiple  
18 products estimating local, regional and global scale changes; a common  
19 benchmarking and assessment exercise; and platforms for data download,  
20 intercomparison and visualization.

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22 These terms of reference encompass the Databank working group's (DWG)  
23 responsibilities associated with development, management, versioning, and  
24 provenance tracking of a transparent and comprehensive databank.

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26 *2. Databank Working Group purpose*

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28 2.1 The Databank working group exists to promote the development and  
29 maintenance of a global databank of surface temperature data and other surface  
30 meteorological variables consisting of openly accessible and traceable data and  
31 metadata.

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33 2.2 Strategic guidance for DWG efforts will be provided by the STI Steering  
34 Committee as defined in the Steering Committee's Terms of Reference.

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36 2.3 Implementation of activities associated with development and maintenance of  
37 the Databank is the responsibility of the DWG and its task teams and will be  
38 described in a DWG Implementation Plan for the Databank as part of the  
39 overarching initiative Implementation Plan. The DWG will assess its progress  
40 against this Implementation Plan and will be responsible for updating the  
41 Implementation Plan as required.

42  
43 2.4 The DWG has ultimate responsibility for the Databank website (currently at  
44 [http://www.gosic.org/GLOBAL\\_SURFACE\\_DATABANK/GBD.html/](http://www.gosic.org/GLOBAL_SURFACE_DATABANK/GBD.html/)), the content  
45 of the data provided via this website as well as other mirror websites.

46

1 2.5 The DWG will work in partnership with other working groups of the Surface  
2 Temperatures Initiative to support the overall objectives of this program. These  
3 working groups are envisaged to consist of a Benchmarking working group and a  
4 Data Access working group.

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6 *3. DWG Strategic Responsibilities*

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8 3.1 The DWG will be responsible for data collection and development activities  
9 including provenance and version control associated with establishing and  
10 maintaining Stage 0 through Stage 3 of the Databank.

11  
12 3.2 DWG members will serve as focal points within their respective WMO region to  
13 acquire new sources of data. These data can be provided in Stage 0, Stage 1, or  
14 Stage 2 formats.

15  
16 3.3 The DWG will develop guidelines for data submission and other communication  
17 tools to facilitate the submission of data by external parties.

18  
19 3.4 Development of quality controlled (Stage 4) and bias corrected (Stage 5) data  
20 will not be the responsibility of the DWG. Criteria for assessment of quality  
21 control and bias correction methodologies will be established by the  
22 Benchmarking working group (BWG). The BWG will be responsible for validating  
23 Stage 4 and Stage 5 data derived from the Databank.

24  
25 3.5 The DWG will provide Stage 4 and 5 formatting and submission guidance and  
26 will be responsible for integrating these data back into the Databank as value  
27 added products.

28  
29 3.6 The DWG version control and provenance practices will be applied to all Stages  
30 of data from Stage 0 through Stage 5.

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32 3.7 The DWG will partner with other organizations for hosting of the Databank. The  
33 Databank will initially be hosted by GOSIC (Global Observing Systems  
34 Information Center; <http://gosis.org/>). A minimum of one mirror site will be  
35 established as resources become available.

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37 *4. Task Team support to the Databank working group*

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39 4.1 Activities of the DWG will be supported by Task Teams charged with developing  
40 solutions to targeted issues associated with priorities established by the DWG.

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42 4.2 Task teams will consist of members of the DWG with relevant expertise and may  
43 include other experts not serving as part of the DWG.

44  
45 4.3 Task teams may be initiated at any time and may be disbanded once all  
46 objectives are met.

- 1  
2 4.4 At the present time there are two Task Teams  
3     ○ Data provenance and version control  
4     ○ Crowd sourcing  
5

6 4.5 The DWG will consider verbal or written reports from Task Team chairs at each  
7 meeting.  
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9 4.6 Task Teams will publish written reports summarizing minutes from  
10 teleconferences on the Surface Temperatures Initiative website within two  
11 weeks of each teleconference.  
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### 13 *5. Reporting* 14

15 5.1 The DWG shall report to the Surface Temperatures Initiative Steering Committee  
16 through its Chair during steering committee conference calls which occur at a  
17 minimum quarterly.  
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19 5.2 The DWG Chair will report in person when face-to-face meetings or workshops  
20 of the STI are held.  
21     ○ Any member of the DWG is allowed to represent the working group at  
22 such meetings to reduce costs, travel, and overheads.  
23     ○ Remote reporting by the chair through e.g Webex or Skype shall be  
24 considered adequate in lieu of in person attendance by a working  
25 group member.  
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27 5.3 The DWG will be expected to respond in a timely manner to additional  
28 reasonable reporting requests from the STI Steering Committee.  
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30 5.4 Defined outputs from the Implementation Plan will be reported to the STI  
31 Steering Committee and posted on the web upon completion.  
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### 33 *6. Mode of operation* 34

35 6.1 The DWG will communicate primarily through regular teleconferences occurring  
36 at least on a quarterly basis or as deemed necessary by committee members.  
37     ○ Approved minutes from these calls will be posted as soon as possible  
38 thereafter and at a minimum within four weeks through  
39 [www.surface temperatures.org](http://www.surface temperatures.org) or another web based portal without  
40 restriction.  
41

42 6.2 Where a quoracy (one third) of DWG members are in attendance at a scientific  
43 meeting a side-meeting may be deemed to be in lieu of a teleconference of the  
44 committee as a whole.

- Regardless, side meetings are encouraged and a brief summary from any such meeting should be reported to the Committee as a whole at its next meeting.

6.3 If deemed necessary by a simple majority vote, funding will be sought for a dedicated meeting of the DWG.

6.4 An email list exists to facilitate discussion and will be maintained by the chair.

## *7. Membership*

7.1 Membership will consist of at a minimum one individual from at least 4 WMO regions plus the Chair of the DWG.

7.2 The Chair of the Surface Temperatures Initiative Steering Committee will serve as a member of the DWG on an ex-officio basis.

7.3 Additional members are considered at the discretion of the DWG Chair or under the advisement of working group members.

7.4 Membership will be reconsidered on a bi-annual basis or at the request of individual Committee members or the Initiative sponsors.

7.5 Members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend teleconferences and provide relevant input by email in advance in the event of non-attendance.

7.6 The DWG is an entirely voluntary commitment so there is no explicit workload requirements, beyond reasonable expectations of discharging the activities detailed in these terms of reference or efforts volunteered and documented in agreed meeting notes.

7.7 Current membership is detailed in Annex A.

## *8. Terms of reference revision*

8.1 Terms of reference and membership will be revised no later than two years from the version date of this document.

- Revision can be requested by a 1/3 vote of DWG members.

