International Surface Temperature Initiative (ISTI)

Data Rescue Task Team Terms of Reference

Version 1. 12/09/13

1. Initiative background

The International Surface Temperature Initiative, endorsed by the WMO Commission for Climatology at its 15th session, was launched at a meeting at the UK Met Office, Exeter, in September 2010. To meet the requirements placed on climate science in the 21st Century, it is necessary to create a suite of high quality and high resolution data-products, with openness, transparency, verification, and user tools. Such a range of estimates, and common framework, would aid decision-making at national and international scales and inform adaptation strategies. Crucially, this Initiative is envisaged to be international and interdisciplinary - involving climate scientists, statisticians, metrologists and software engineers from around the world. The Initiative should encompass: data rescue and digitisation; an open, transparent and comprehensive databank with versioning and provenance tracking; a data-portal for multiple products estimating local, regional and global scale changes; a common benchmarking and assessment exercise; and platforms for data download, intercomparison and visualization.

2. Data Rescue Task Team purpose

2.1 The Data Rescue Task Team exists to:

2.1.1 Support the Databank Working Group in its efforts to uncover new data sources and improve the provenance of existing holdings through data rescue, digitization, and preservation activities.

2.1.2 Promote data rescue activities with a focus upon, but not restricted solely to, land surface air temperature data records.

2.1.3 Ensure that known ongoing data rescue activities by third parties are pulled through to the databank, and if not possible, at least to report on them to the Databank Working Group.

2.1.4 Advise the Initiative on issues pertaining to data rescue including issues such as funding opportunities, requests to provide letters of support and other similar issues as they may arise.

2.1.5 Liaise with other relevant international data rescue bodies (e.g. the WMO Expert Team on Data Rescue) to explore the feasibility of developing an on-line registry to document data rescue activities and their results worldwide.

2.2 The task team is responsible for providing strategic input on data rescue activities to Initiative strategy documents, the Databank Working Group and the Steering Committee.

2.3 The task team is responsible for the data rescue page(s) on the www.surfacetemperatures.org domain.

3. Reporting

3.1 The task team shall inform the report by the databank working group to the steering committee through an annual report prepared by December 1st of each year.

3.2 The task team shall report to the databank working group, through its chair, on their regular calls.

3.3 The task team will be expected to respond in a timely manner to additional reasonable reporting requests from the databank working group on an ad hoc basis.

4. Mode of operation

4.1 The Task Team will communicate primarily through regular teleconferences occurring at least on a 6 monthly basis or as deemed necessary by task team members.

- Approved minutes from these calls will be posted as soon as possible thereafter and at a minimum within four weeks through www.surfacetemperatures.org or another web based portal without restriction.

4.2 Where a quoracy (one third) of Task Team members are in attendance at a scientific meeting a side-meeting may be deemed to be in lieu of a teleconference of the Task Team as a whole.

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

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

5. Membership

5.1 Membership will consist of at a minimum ten individuals at any time with representation from:

- at least four countries in at least three WMO regions (effectively continents)
- Relevant activities with a recognized interest in data rescue activities such as ACRE, IEDRO and ICA&D.

5.2 Membership will be reconsidered on a bi-annual basis or at the request of individual Task Team members or the Databank Working Group.

5.3 Individual members may request to resign from the Task Team by writing to the chair. They are encouraged to suggest suitable replacements who may be able to fulfill the role that they took.

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

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

5.6 Current membership is detailed in Annex A.

6. Terms of reference revision

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

- Revision can be requested by a 1/3 vote of Task Team members or by the Databank Working Group.

Annex A

Peter Thorne (NERSC, Norway) (Chair)
Rob Allan (Met Office Hadley Centre, UK) (ACRE project lead)
Richard Crouthamel (International Environmental Data Rescue Organization, IEDRO, USA)
William Angel (NOAA NCDC CDMP)
Manola Brunet (University Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona, Spain) (WMO/MEDARE Initiative lead)
Stefan Bronnimann (University of Bern, Switzerland) (http://www.data-rescue-at-home.org/)
Jay Lawrimore (NOAA NCDC) (Chair, Databank Working Group)
Hermann Machel (DWD, Germany)
Juerg Luterbacher (Justus-Liebig University, Giessen, Germany)
Masumi Zaiki (Seikei University, Tokyo, Japan)
Arfon Smith (Zooniverse, Oxford University, UK)
Stuart Lynn (Zooniverse, Oxford University, UK)
Jared Rennie (NOAA NCDC)