

1 **Surface Temperature Initiative**

3 **Steering Committee Terms of Reference**

5 Version 1. 4/20/11

7 *1. Initiative background*

9 The Surface Temperature Initiative, endorsed by the WMO Commission for
10 Climatology at its 15th 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. Crucially, this Initiative is
16 envisaged to be international and interdisciplinary - involving climate scientists,
17 statisticians, metrologists and software engineers from around the world. The
18 initiative should encompass: data rescue and digitisation; an open, transparent and
19 comprehensive databank with versioning and provenance tracking; a data-portal for
20 multiple products estimating local, regional and global scale changes; a common
21 benchmarking and assessment exercise; and platforms for data download,
22 intercomparison and visualization.

24 *2. Steering Committee purpose*

26 2.1 The Steering Committee exists to promote the Surface Temperature Initiative
27 and to provide scientific oversight and technical input to the working groups
28 under its oversight.

30 2.2 The Steering Committee is responsible, along with the working groups, for
31 drafting an Implementation Plan for the Initiative; for assessing progress against
32 this Implementation Plan; and for updating the Implementation Plan as required.

34 2.3 The Steering Committee has ultimate responsibility for the Initiative website
35 (<http://www.surface temperatures.org/>) and other communications undertaken
36 under the auspices of the Initiative.

38 2.4 The Steering Committee acts as the point of contact to the Initiative sponsors
39 who are envisaged to be

- 40 ○ The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Commission for
- 41 Climatology (CCI),
- 42 ○ International Statistical Institute (ISI) through its environment
- 43 section, The International Environmetric Society (TIES).
- 44 ○ International Office of Weights and measures (BIPM) through its
- 45 Consultative Committee on Thermometry (CCT)

46 Sponsors and reporting bodies at this stage are to be confirmed.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

3. Reporting

3.1 The Steering Committee shall report to sponsors through an annual report prepared by January 15th of each year. This report shall:

- Highlight progress in the prior year
- Provide a detailed plan for the coming year and indicative plans thereafter
- Highlight substantive issues where sponsor input is required

3.2 The report should be as short as possible whilst being comprehensible to a lay audience and highlighting all salient issues.

- The report will be *published without restriction on the web* at time of submission to sponsors and moderated public comments solicited through a blog or similar forum.

3.3 If requested every reasonable effort shall be made to report in person to the sponsors at their meetings.

- Any member of the Steering Committee is allowed to represent the Committee as a whole at such meetings to reduce costs, travel, and overheads.
- Remote reporting by the chair through e.g Webex or Skype shall be considered adequate in lieu of in person attendance by a Committee member.

3.4 The Committee will be expected to respond in a timely manner to additional reasonable reporting requests from sponsors raised on an ad hoc basis.

3.5 Defined outputs from the Implementation Plan will be reported to sponsors and posted on the web upon completion.

4. Oversight of coordinated Initiative activities

4.1 The Steering Committee shall instigate as required and provide oversight to working groups under its purview. At the present time these consist of:

- Databank working group
- Benchmarking and assessment working group

4.2 The chair of the Steering Committee will have ex-officio membership on these groups. Chairs of these groups will be members of the Steering Committee.

4.3 The Steering Committee will consider verbal or written reports from working group chairs at each meeting.

4.4 Working group chairs will produce reports annually by October 15th for consideration and incorporation into the main overarching report to sponsors.

1 4.5 These reports will be published on the web in a timely manner.
2
3

4 *5. Mode of operation* 5

6 5.1 The Steering Committee will communicate primarily through regular
7 teleconferences occurring at least on a quarterly basis or as deemed necessary
8 by committee members.

- 9 ○ Approved minutes from these calls will be posted as soon as possible
10 thereafter and at a minimum within four weeks through
11 www.surfacetemperatures.org or another web based portal without
12 restriction.
13

14 5.2 Where a quoracy (one third) of Steering Committee members are in attendance
15 at a scientific meeting a side-meeting may be deemed to be in lieu of a
16 teleconference of the committee as a whole.

- 17 ○ Regardless, side meetings are encouraged and a brief summary from
18 any such meeting should be reported to the Committee as a whole at
19 its next meeting.
20

21 5.3 If deemed necessary by a simple majority vote, funding will be sought for a
22 dedicated meeting of the Committee.
23

24 5.4 An email list exists to facilitate discussion and will be maintained by the chair.
25
26

27 *6. Membership* 28

29 6.1 Membership will consist of at a minimum ten individuals at any time with
30 representation from:

- 31 ○ at least four countries in at least three WMO regions (effectively
32 continents)
- 33 ○ the climate science, statistical and metrological communities.
34

35 6.2 Chairs of groups that answer to the Steering Committee will be members.
36

37 6.3 Additional members are considered at the discretion of the Committee or under
38 the advisement of Initiative sponsors.
39

40 6.4 One senior representative from each Initiative sponsor is welcome to sit on the
41 Committee and encouraged to attend meetings on an ex-officio basis.
42

43 6.5 Membership will be reconsidered on a bi-annual basis or at the request of
44 individual Committee members or the Initiative sponsors.
45

1 6.6 Members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend teleconferences
2 and provide relevant input by email in advance in the event of non-attendance.

3
4 6.7 The Committee is an entirely voluntary commitment so there are no explicit
5 workload requirements, beyond reasonable expectations of discharging the
6 activities detailed in these terms of reference or efforts volunteered and minuted
7 in agreed meeting notes.

8
9 6.8 Current membership is detailed in Annex A.

10
11 *7. Terms of reference revision*

12
13 7.1 Terms of reference and membership will be revised no later than two years from
14 the version date of this document.

- 15 ○ Revision can be requested by a 1/3 vote of Committee members or by
16 any single Initiative sponsor.

17

1 **Annex A**

2

3 **Membership (current 3/16/11)**

4

5 Peter Thorne (CICS-NC, USA, Chair)

6 Jay Lawrimore (NOAA NCDC, USA, Chair Databank working group)

7 Kate Willett (Met Office Hadley Centre, UK, Chair Benchmarking and Assessment
8 working group)

9 Peter Stott (Met Office Hadley Centre, UK, Chair Governance working group)

10 Xiaolan Wang (Environment Canada)

11 Matilde Rusticucci (Buenos Aires University, Argentina)

12 Blair Trewin (Bureau of Meteorology, Australia)

13 Akiyo Yatagai (Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN), Japan)

14 Richard Chandler (Department of Statistical Science, University College London, UK)

15 Rob Allan (Met Office Hadley Centre, UK, International ACRE Project Manager)

16 Jayashree Revadekar (Center for Climate Change Research, Indian Institute of
17 Tropical Meteorology, India)

18 Michael de Podesta (National Physical Laboratory, UK)

19 Antonio Possolo (National Institute of Standards & Technology, USA)

20 Gregory Strouse (National Institute of Standards & Technology, USA)

21 Albert Mhanda (ACMAD, Niger)