



Single Voice Principle - Experience in the Netherlands

A short summary of the presentation made by KNMI during the DKKV severe storm meeting 26-28 March 2007 at Schloss Hohenkammer.

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- Since the late 90's KNMI did split of all commercial tasks. Since than all operational tasks at KNMI are safety related. Commercial tasks and Media access was handed over towards commercial weather providers. Next to this KNMI is a data provider (not necessarily the only one) towards these providers on: Model data, observational data, guidance bulletins, user group specific Warnings and Weather Alarms and R&D results
- In the Netherlands there is NO Official Single voice policy during severe or extreme weather events
- However the "Law on KNMI" has specified a very clear role towards the governmental Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute(KNMI) during severe weather events. All the user specific warnings (for: Road traffic, Marine, Aviation, Yachting and Recreation) and The Weather Alarm, the highest state of warning towards the general public, is very well described within the framework of the law on KNMI. Obligation mentioned for KNMI is to well inform the general public on (approaching) severe and extreme weather
- KNMI does not hold any direct access towards the public Media
- KNMI has got a gentleman agreement with the most important commercial weather providers on their role during Weather Alarm situations. In this agreement KNMI promised to personally inform (by telephone) the commercial providers in the onset phase and during the actual phase of a Weather Alarm episode. In return the providers promise to take over the content of the Weather Alarms.
- In practice the commercial weather providers in the Netherlands most of the time do take over the content of KNMI Weather alarms. We are rather satisfied with their role. However their website information is not always that adequate. This might be misleading during severe weather situations towards website users (see also the KNMI summary on the information link towards civil security elsewhere on this website).
- SMS services provided by commercial weather providers, sending the original and unchanged Weather Alarms, do support our task to inform the general public
- In practice there is no agreement with commercial providers during the other, non Weather alarm, warning situations. Meaning that especially during warning situations for Road traffic and Yachting and Recreation the information via commercial weather providers might be inadequate.
- During this year 2007 an evaluation will be executed on the experience gained with the existing Law on KNMI. The evaluation is initiated and performed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Transport. From a KNMI point of view this evaluation should improve the adequacy of severe and extreme weather warnings within the Netherlands. It should strengthen the single voice principle during extreme and devastating weather situations and KNMI access towards public Media should be improved.