***Marine Weather Forecaster Competency 1: Direct Observation Information Note***

***C1 Analyse and Monitor continuously the marine weather situation***

***Competency Description:***

Continuously monitor the latest observations, advisories, forecasts and warnings of marine weather parameters and variables, and significant weather phenomena. Determine the need for issuance, cancellation or amendment/update of advisories, forecasts and warnings according to documented thresholds and regulations

**Note on using Direct Observation**:

Direct Observation of the forecaster on the job may be the most effective method of assessing competency in performing the forecast process. Particular when a “think-aloud” protocol is used to externalise the thought processes and decision making of the forecaster. It is likely to be the method that instills the most confidence in the assessor and the organization on a judgement of competence.

However, several caveats should be kept in mind, and as recommended in WMO-No. 1205, every competency should be assessed using at least two assessment methods to ensure validity. The reasons for this include:

* Even if Direct Observation during an assessment period that extends over multiple forecast shifts, it is unlikely that forecast performance during all critical weather phenomena will be observed.
* Due to time constraints, not all procedures can be observed in the same depth. For example, analysis of data products will likely need to be performed quickly, and all thought processes that go into data analysis might not be visible. All variations in the evolution of a weather phenomenon will not be represented on any particular forecast shift. In other words, while a phenomenon may occur, the complexity of the occurrence and the level of difficulty in making forecasts of location, intensity, initiation and cessation will not be representative of all possible occurences.
* The operational systems may not function exactly the same on each shift, and the data may vary in both availability and degree of trustworthiness. NWP forecasts may vary in quality as well.
* The forecast team that assists in the process will vary from day to day.
* The amount of coordination required with external services may vary from event to event.

**Recommendations:**

Additional assessment methods should be combined with Direct Observation to ensure that competency is being fully assessed, such as Experiential Questions, Simulation, Quiz Items, and/or Portfolio.