

Weather Observations Web site (WOW)



In June 2011 the Met Office, with support of the Royal Meteorological Society and the Department for Education, launched a new website for the collection of user-generated weather observations.

The Weather Observations Website (WOW) offers an exciting new online way for weather enthusiasts to submit their own manual and automatic weather observations. During its first 12 months more than **38 million observations** were submitted via WOW; over 2000 separate observation sites created from 152 different countries, and over 175,000 different visitors to the site. This new source of observations is a valuable extra source of meteorological information to forecasters, particularly in severe weather events and their onset, where a high density of albeit more variable quality data will be especially useful. For example, in snow events or heavy rain events, having access to high density surface data will give extra confidence in the extent and development of such events, helping provide rapid updated guidance on the evolution of such weather situations.

WOW provides a range of different facilities for “citizen weather observers”, including options for the submission of regular manual and automatic weather observations, as well as the upload of weather related photos or one-off weather reports such as “it is snowing” or “I have just seen lightning”. Users are able to view their own data on maps, and also in tabular and graphical formats, as well as being able to view data from other sites. Schools are also an important target audience, and the Met Office and RMetS are working closely with schools to generate new information and tools specifically designed to help teachers and pupils make the best use of the website in their work.

There are many drivers for increased resolution (spatial and temporal) surface observations, not least being new high resolution numerical weather prediction (NWP) models. Collection of citizen weather observations is one exciting way to meet this demand. This, however, is just the first step for this new source of weather observations, and planning has already started on

the next phase of developments. The Met Office will continue to engage with RMetS, education users and others to further develop this fantastic tool.

To view the WOW website go to <http://wow.metoffice.gov.uk/> ^[1]

Source URL: <http://www.accsys.rmets.org/weather-and-climate/observing/weather-observations-web-site-wow>

Links

[1] <http://wow.metoffice.gov.uk/>