

2009 Hurricane Pool Coverage Agreement

1.0 PURPOSE

This noncompetitive pool coverage agreement (hereafter called "Agreement") is intended to facilitate the dissemination of important information from the National Hurricane Center (hereafter called "NHC") to residents in areas threatened by a hurricane, while increasing the efficiency of media-allocated resources and allowing officials to perform their necessary duties with a minimum of interference from the broadcast media, (hereafter called "Media").

2.0 RULES AND REGULATIONS

2.01 General. When a hurricane threatens populated areas of the United States, a pool will be established at NHC, usually with the issuance of a hurricane watch. The decision to activate (and deactivate) the pool will be made by the NHC Public Affairs Officer and the primary and back-up television pool coordinators. Pool participants will be given as much advance notice as possible by NHC. Notification will be made by telephone and, e-mail.

2.02 Security Procedures and Access to NHC

2.02.1 General. Department of Commerce (DOC) security guidelines require NHC to enforce DOC security policies and ensure NHC procedures and policies conform. These security procedures will be enforced year round.

2.02.2 Upon activation of this agreement, Media News Directors or Bureau Chiefs will identify to NHC, in writing via e-mail, a list of all employee(s) they require to work at NHC in covering the 2008 Atlantic Hurricane Season. This "Authorized Access List" will include the name(s) of each employee and their job title(s), and the name, title and contact telephone number of the requesting official (e.g. Assignment Editor, News Director). The "Authorized Access List" should be transmitted electronically via facsimile to (305) 553-1901 ATTN: Public Affairs Officer; or e-mailed to: Dennis.Feltgen@noaa.gov with a copy to ncep.nhc.guards@noaa.gov

2.02.3 Non-U.S. Media. Overseas journalists not credentialed to a United States-based Media organization must submit their: (a) Applicant name, (b) Date of Birth, (c) Country of Citizenship, (d) Passport number, and (e) Journalist Visa Number, either by facsimile or E-mail, (as referenced in paragraph 2.02.2) not less than 24-hours prior to their arrival at NHC. Upon arrival they will be asked to complete a questionnaire, and present photo identification (passport or foreign press credentials). This information permits timely review of their application by other federal agencies.

2.02.4 Press Credentials. Media entering NHC are required to show their Press Credentials (with photo identification) to the Security Guard located at NHC's South entrance. When the Media representative signs in, the Security Guard will cross-check the Press Credentials (with photo identification) against the "Authorized Access List". Media who forget to bring their Press Credentials, but otherwise appearing on the "Authorized Access List," will be issued a temporary NHC Building Pass only upon surrendering a driver's license, military identification or corporate identification (with photo). This ensures the temporary Building Pass is returned upon leaving the building.

2.02.5 Vehicles. No Electronic Field Production (EFP) vehicles (e.g. satellite and microwave trucks) are permitted to park near NHC without prior notification and approval by NHC. This notification will include (as in paragraph 2.02.3): (a) the Media organization requesting access; (b) the names of staff members accompanying the vehicle; (c) the make and model of the vehicle; and (d) the vehicle's license plate number. Requests for vehicle access must be re-submitted for each hurricane event.

2.02.6 Acknowledgment. NHC will acknowledge receipt of both facsimile and E-mail requests for building access by return E-mail message. This acknowledgment grants individuals appearing on the "Authorized Access List" entry to NHC for the duration of the(2008) season, subject to the display of Press Credentials or temporary Building Pass.

2.3 Display of Credentials. While working at NHC, all Media shall display, at all times, their Press credentials or Building Pass on their outer garments, at all times.

2.4 Search of Equipment and Vehicles. All vehicles, parcels, hand bags, computer cases, brief cases, camera equipment cases etc. are subject to hand search.

3.0 POOL ROTATION

Once a pool is activated, the Primary Pool stations will get crews in place and establish audio/video signals as expeditiously as possible. The primary pool will remain in place until relieved by the Back-up Pool station. The stations may rotate staffing approximately "10 hours on/10 hours off", or they may work-out a different schedule consistent with the weather threat. When NHC and all pool coordinators agree the danger has passed, the pool may be deactivated. The pool crews provided by these stations will work exclusively for the pool and not, during their designated shifts, for their respective stations.

4.0 OFFICIAL START OF THE POOL

No pool feeds may begin less than 30 minutes after pool stations have been alerted to the start-up. An NHC representative will provide an official statement to signify the official activation of the pool.

5.0 LOCAL / REGIONAL POOL

When a storm threatens Miami-Dade, Broward, and/or Monroe counties, the Primary and Back-up stations will provide LOCAL pool coverage, with stations following the pool rotation. When a storm threatens an area OUTSIDE Dade, Broward, and/or Monroe counties, the primary and back-up stations will provide REGIONAL pool coverage, if demand warrants. Rotation of regional shots will follow the local pool rotation order, with out-of-town receiving priority over those stations simply reporting the story.

6.0 NUMBER OF POOL CAMERAS

There will be no more than four fixed "live" pool cameras in position at the Hurricane Center at any time. They will include local/regional, network, and Spanish language pools.

7.0 MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL/REGIONAL POOL

The local/regional English language pool consists of WFOR, WTVJ, WSVN, WPLG, and WSFL. They will serve as the local pool when a storm threatens Miami-Dade, Broward, and/or Monroe counties and as a regional pool when the storm threatens other populated areas. The English language Network pool consists of ABC, CBS, CNN, FOX News Channel and NBC/MSNBC. The networks will work-out staffing, so that all network needs are met around the clock.

The Spanish language pool includes Univision Net, Univision23, Telemundo51, Telemundo Net, WGEN-TV8 and CNN Español.

8.0 STAFFING ROTATIONS

The staffing rotations for the NHC pools are:

<u>ENGLISH LANGUAGE</u>		<u>SPANISH LANGUAGE</u>	
<i>PRIMARY</i>	<i>BACK-UP*</i>	<i>PRIMARY</i>	<i>BACK-UP*</i>
WFOR	Composite	Univision Net	Composite

Upon pool activation, the primary station (In 2009: English: WFOR; Spanish: Univision Net) will assume pool staffing responsibility for the first 10 hours and will be followed by the back-up station (for 2009: English: WPLG (photographer), WTVJ (engineer) and WSVN (producer); Spanish: Telemundo51 (photographer), CNN Espanol (engineer) and Univision23 (producer).

*The back-up station as lead bears responsibility to ensure back-up pool staffing is fully met (with a camera person, engineer and producer). The secondary station may request the assistance of other local stations to staff up to two of the three pool staff positions.

9.0 PRE and POST POOL ACTIVATION

Prior to the activation of the pool, stations are responsible to serve their needs and those of their out-of-town affiliates with their own crews. Live shot requests must be booked through the NHC Public Affairs Officer. After the pool is activated, access by local stations in addition to their scheduled pool rotation times, or "Uni-laterals," will be permitted to the extent they do not interfere with pool operations.

10.0 FORECASTER AVAILABILITY

Forecasters will be made available by NHC as long as the pool is active. Spanish-speaking forecasters will be made available as well.

11.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

The pool coordinator/station is responsible for the following:

11.1 Coordinating live shots or stations, using the pool to take calls from their staffers, dialing IFB, keeping track of and assigning windows, resolving any difficulties that may arise concerning pool access/coverage.

11.2 Providing one photographer and one engineer in addition to the coordinator, and all equipment necessary to properly carry-out the pool responsibilities.

11.3 Making certain that all equipment is functioning properly.

11.4 Acquiring three local phone lines, with long distance service. The service will be provided to the pool IFB and production coordination equipment. The cost of such service shall be underwritten by the primary pool station. Service should remain consistent during the entire hurricane threat.

11.5 Maintaining a chronological record of daily Pool Rotation Sheets for all live shots. This information will be provided to the NHC Public Affairs Office at the end of each shift.

12.0 POOL WINDOWS

12.01 PURPOSE: The assignment of pool "windows" gives television and radio participants a fair and equal access to the NHC forecaster at the live shot desk and monitor.

12.02 Pool participants can use their windows in either of two ways: (1) a station Q&A from the remote studio with the NHC forecaster at the desk, and (2) a station reporter on site interviewing the NHC forecaster at the desk.

12.03 Pool rotations are determined each year at the annual pre-season pool meeting. A draw of lots, in the presence of network and station representatives, determines the order.

12.04 English and Spanish language Networks are included in the rotation.

12:05 Generic information-only live broadcasts will be made by an NHC spokesperson at the top of each hour, except at 4 AM, 10 AM, 4 PM, and 10 PM EDT.

12.06 At certain times, NHC meteorologists must perform forecasting duties so they will be unavailable to the media.

12.07 There has been time set aside for breaks for the forecasters at: :25-:30 and :50-:59 of every hour.

12.08 English language Networks have been assigned blocks of time corresponding to their unique air times/broadcast requirements between 7am and 8:30am and between 6:30pm and 7pm. The network pool has agreed to decide among them how their rotation will work. If they choose not to use those times, they will be made available for 1) the network's affiliates or 2) other pool participants. In addition, during the 5:05am-5:34am; 6:05am-6:34am; 12:05pm-12:29 pm; 5:05-5:29pm; 6:05-6:29pm; and 11:05-11:29pm, the rotation will ONLY include the local pool stations.

13.0 POOL ROTATION

The 2009 English language pool rotation is as follows:

- 1) WPLG-TV10
- 2) WTVJ-TV6
- 3) WSVN-TV7
- 4) WFOR-TV4
- 5) WSFL-TV39 (Between 5:05 AM – 8:59 AM only)

The 2009 Spanish language local and network pool rotation is as follows:

- 1) Univision23
- 2) Telemundo 51
- 3) WGEN-TV8 (2 PM to 10PM only)
- 4) Univision Net
- 5) CNN Espanol
- 6) Univision Net
- 7) Telemundo Net

The 2009 English Network pool rotation is as follows:

- 1) CNN
- 2) FNC
- 3) NBC
- 4) ABC
- 5) CBS

14.0 ROTATION CLOCK

The pool rotation "clock" begins at 12:00:01 am the day the pool goes into effect. The pool stations will move ahead one position every day at 12:00:01am until the pool is called off. For instance, the second day of the pool, the station in the first position moves to the bottom, the station in the second position moves to the top, the station in the third position moves to the second, and so on. Any radio requests will be reserved in a "Network/Affiliate use" time slot.

15.0 ROTATION BEGINS

With each new storm of the season, the pool rotation begins again with the "Day One" rotation.

16.0 USE OF WINDOWS

If a station or its representatives are not prepared to take advantage of its "window" for whatever reason, it will lose that position. Window times CAN be traded on an individual basis but it is the responsibility of the stations involved to work with the pool coordinator to arrange the changes. The pool coordinator must also be informed if a station does not intend to use its assigned window.

17.0 PROPRIETARY RIGHTS TO UNILATERAL WINDOWS

Broadcast content fed during unilateral windows is the exclusive property of the individual organization and may not be used by any other entity without permission. The NHC Public Affairs Office shall determine the extent to which unilateral coverage may be permitted, given limitations on space and need for noise discipline.

18.0 FEE PAYMENTS BY NON-POOL MEMBERS

Any station not contributing personnel or equipment to the pool may broadcast advisories from NHC at the cost of \$500 for each 24 hours (or a pro-rated portion) it uses the pool. Fees collected will go toward maintenance and improvement of the NHC pool. Costs and labor necessary to give such stations access to the feeds are the sole responsibility of the outside station.

19.0 RECOMMENDED STAFFING LEVELS

NHC strongly recommends that each participating station have a pool producer at NHC to represent its interests and those of its affiliates. Members of the Media not actively involved in broadcast are asked to wait outside the forecast room area while the pool is in effect. Unilateral broadcasts using NHC's Hurricane Operations Area as a backdrop must keep "chatter"(noise levels) to a minimum to avoid interfering with ongoing operations. The NHC Public Affairs Officer shall determine if the number of unilateral reports must be limited to maintain noise discipline.

20.0 TECHNICAL FAILURE, USE OF COMMON CONTENT

In the event of technical failure, the Pool Coordinator shall notify all participating stations that they are authorized to re-broadcast official advisories from each other's air signal. In such event, pool stations agree to drop a bug/chyron that includes their call letters or station logo.

21.0 PARKING AT NHC IS LIMITED

The NHC has designated three (3) parking spaces in front of the building for the on-duty Pool staff. The Pool Producers will allocate these spaces. The severe limitations in the number of available parking spaces adjacent to NHC require that ALL OTHER pool members park their vehicles on the grass on the north side of the building. Satellite trucks will park on the concrete pad on the east side of the building. Microwave trucks may park on the asphalt on the east side of the building or on the paved area across the street from the south side of the building. Vehicle Identification Tags/ Access Passes to these locations are available from the NHC Security Guard.

22.0 USE OF MEDIA ROOM

No food or drink is permitted in the media area. All cell phones will be placed on vibrate or silence.

23.0 FORMAL INTENT TO PARTICIPATE

Upon receipt of this agreement, each participating station shall submit in writing their willingness and intention to abide by the terms to other participants. A sample draft of this letter is included in this packet.

24.0 ANNUAL POOL MEETING

Participating organizations agree to meet annually prior to the start of hurricane season to review and revise this agreement.

25.0 NHC GENERIC HITS

When the pool is in operation, a generic broadcast will be made at both the English and Spanish desk at the top of each hour beginning at exactly :00.

26.0 "FORECAST WINDOW"

Refers to specific times at which the forecaster on-duty is unavailable due to necessary

27.0 "NETWORK POOL PRE-FEED"

refers to tape and live-to-tape hits which the network pool members have at their disposal; no live is available at this time.

28.0 SUMMARY OF 2009 ENGLISH & SPANISH NHC POOL ROTATION TIME SEQUENCE

All times in DST(Daylight Savings Time), in effect from March 8 to November 1, 2009.

12AM-3:59AM covers the basic rotation with generics at top of each hour.

4AM-4:59AM is reserved for Forecaster planning.

5AM-5:34AM and 6AM-6:34 AM is reserved for local pool rotation only.

7:05-7:19AM and 8:05-8:19AM is reserved for network rotation only.

9AM-9:59AM begins basic rotation, with a generic at the top of each hour.

10:00AM-10:50AM reserved for Forecaster planning.

10:50AM-10:59AM is reserved for a press conference (if needed).

11:00AM-3:59PM begins basic rotation again, with a generic at the top of each hour.

4PM-4:50PM is reserved for Forecaster planning.

4:50PM-4:59PM is reserved for a press conference (if needed).

5PM-5:29 PM and 6:04PM-6:29PM is reserved for local pool only, with a generic at the top of the hour.

6:30PM-7PM is reserved for network pool rotation.

7PM-9:59PM begins basic rotation again, with a generic at top of each hour.

10:00PM-10:50PM is reserved for Forecaster planning.

10:50PM-10:59PM is reserved for a press conference (if needed).

11-11:29PM is reserved for local pool rotation only, with a generic at the top of the hour.

11:30PM-3:59AM begins basic rotation again, with a generic at the top of each hour.

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