



2016 National Hurricane Center Hurricane Pool Coverage Agreement

1.0 PURPOSE

This non-competitive pool coverage agreement (hereafter called "Agreement") is intended to facilitate the dissemination of important information from NOAA's 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, usually with the issuance of a hurricane watch, a pool will be established at NHC. The decision to activate (and deactivate) the pool will be made by the NHC Public Affairs Officer and the primary and secondary 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 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 a media pool, 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 particular hurricane event. 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 e-mail 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, by e-mail and 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 only). 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", and issued a Building Pass badge. Media who forget to bring their Press Credentials but otherwise appearing on the "Authorized Access List" will be issued a temporary 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 Display of Credentials. While working at NHC, all Media shall display, at all times, their Press credentials and Building Pass on their outer garments, at all times.

2.02.6 Acknowledgment. NHC will acknowledge receipt of 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 2016 season, subject to the display of Press Credentials and Building Pass.

2.03 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: (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.

2.03.1 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 station will get a crew in place and establish audio/video signals as expeditiously as possible. The primary pool will remain in place until relieved by the secondary pool stations. The stations may rotate staffing approximately "12 hours on/12 hours off", or they may work out a different schedule consistent with the hurricane threat. When NHC determines that the danger has passed, the pool will 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 60 minutes after pool stations have been alerted to the start-up. An NHC representative will provide via e-mail an official statement to signify the official activation of the pool.

5.0 LOCAL VS. NATIONAL POOL

5.01 When a hurricane threatens South Florida, a local pool will be called. The primary and secondary stations will provide LOCAL pool coverage, with stations following the local pool rotation schedule. The national pool will be activated as well, with network stations using available network/affiliate slots within the local pool schedule.

5.02 If a hurricane threatens only those areas outside of South Florida, then only the national pool will be activated. If a local station desires a live interview at NHC, it would be arranged through the national pool producer on an availability basis. Priority will be given to those stations in the hurricane watch and warning areas.

5.03 Because the national pool does not have an engineer, the local pool stations must provide one. The engineer need not be on site for the event, only on standby in the event a piece of equipment was to fail.

For 2016, WSVN will provide the engineer for the first shift, with the secondary station (WPLG) providing the engineer for the second shift. The primary and secondary stations will provide contact information of their respective engineer to the National pool producer upon activation of the national pool.

5.04 If a local pool is called, the primary and secondary local pool stations only need to provide a producer. The network pool camera and (standby) engineer will have the lead for the on-site duties. This is an effort to save station resources. However, the primary and secondary local pool stations must have a photographer on standby in case of any unexpected problems with the national pool camera.

5.05 The Spanish language pool will be activated upon a U.S. hurricane threat on a case by case basis upon consultation by NHC with the primary and secondary Spanish language pool stations. It will follow the same guidelines as those listed in the document for the English network pool.

6.0 NUMBER OF POOL CAMERAS

There will be no more than two fixed pool cameras in position at the Hurricane Center at any one time in the pool area - the local/network camera and Spanish language pool camera.

7.0 MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL & NETWORK POOL

The 2016 local/regional English language pool consists of WFOR, WTVJ, WSVN, and WPLG. They will serve as the local pool when a storm threatens Miami-Dade, Broward, and/or Monroe counties.

The 2016 English language Network pool consists of ABC, CBS, CNN, FOX, NBC, Associated Press and The Weather Channel. The networks will work-out staffing so that all network needs are met around the clock.

The 2016 Spanish language pool includes Univision Net, WLTV-TV23, WSCV-TV51, Telemundo Net, WGEN-TV8, and WJAN-TV41.

8.0 STAFFING ROTATIONS

The 2016 staffing for rotations of the NHC local pools are:

<u>ENGLISH LANGUAGE</u>		<u>SPANISH LANGUAGE</u>	
<i>PRIMARY</i>	<i>SECONDARY</i>	<i>PRIMARY</i>	<i>SECONDARY</i>
WSVN-TV7	Composite	Telemundo Net	Composite

Upon local pool activation, the primary station will assume pool staffing responsibility for the first 12 hours and will be followed by the secondary stations.

Because the network pool would be in operation, the primary local pool station is responsible only for providing an on-site producer to handle local requests. The local photographer and engineer would be on as-needed basis only.

Similarly, the secondary local pool station composite must provide an on-site producer for the second shift, with a photographer and engineering on as-needed basis only.

For 2016, the secondary English local pool station composite consists of WFOR (photographer), WPLG (engineer) and WTVJ (producer). The Spanish pool station composite consists of WLTV (photographer), WSCV (engineer) and Univision Net (producer).

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. Interview 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 "unilaterals," 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 when the Spanish pool is activated, and on an availability-basis when only the national or local pool is active.

11.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

The pool producer is responsible for the following:

11.01 Coordinating live shots and 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.

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

11.03 Making certain that all equipment is functioning properly.

11.04 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.

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 local, English network and Spanish language stations have separate rotations.

12:5 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 is 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-12:29pm; 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 2016 English language pool rotation is as follows:

- 1) WPLG-TV10
- 2) WFOR-TV4
- 3) WTVJ-TV6
- 4) WSVN-TV7

The 2016 Spanish language local/network pool rotation is as follows:

- 1) WGEN-TV8
- 2) WJAN-TV41
- 3) WSCV-TV51
- 4) Univision Net
- 5) Telemundo Net
- 6) WLTV-TV23

The 2016 English Network pool rotation is as follows:

- 1) ABC
- 2) CNN
- 3) CBS
- 4) TWC
- 5) NBC
- 6) FOX

Schedules for the local English language pool, English Network pool and Spanish language pool are placed on the NHC website at <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/pool> prior to the start of the Atlantic hurricane season on June 1.

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 each day at 12:00:01 am until the pool is terminated. 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 PHONE LINE COSTS

The primary English Station and the primary Spanish station will underwrite the costs of activating and maintaining the three local phone lines, with long distance service, from June 1 through November 30. The service will be provided to the pool IFB and production coordination equipment, and should remain consistent during the entire hurricane threat.

19.0 RECOMMENDED STAFFING LEVELS

Members of the media not actively involved in broadcasts must work in the back half of the media 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 which 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 NHC Public Affairs Officer 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. A parking permit will be issued for those vehicles. 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

Absolutely no food or open drink is permitted in the media area. All cell phones must 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.

24.0 ANNUAL POOL MEETING

Participating organizations agree to meet annually, if needed, 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 (if activated) at the top of each hour beginning at exactly 00:30. The exceptions are at 4 AM, 10 AM, 4 PM, and 10 PM EDT.

26.0 "FORECAST WINDOW"

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

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 2016 ENGLISH & SPANISH NHC POOL ROTATION TIME SEQUENCE

All times in DST (Daylight Savings Time), in effect from March 6 to November 5, 2016.

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.

7:05-7:24AM and 8:05-8:24AM is reserved for network rotation only.

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

10:00AM-10:45AM reserved for Forecaster planning.

10:45AM-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-4:45 PM is reserved for Forecaster planning.

4:45PM-4:59PM is reserved for a press conference (if needed).

5:05PM-5:29 PM and 6:05PM-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-10:45PM is reserved for Forecaster planning.

10:45PM-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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