New Orleans/Baton Rouge Weather Forecast Office (WFO):

- (2) Residual Tulsa WSO into the future Tulsa WFO;
- (3) Residual Oklahoma City WSO into the future Oklahoma City WFO; and(4) Residual Phoenix WSO into the future Phoenix WFO.

In accordance with Public Law 102–567, the public will have 60 days in which to comment on these proposed certifications.

**DATES:** Comments are requested by November 27, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the proposed consolidation packages can be sent to Janet Gilmer, Room 12316, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, telephone 301–713–0276. All comments should be sent to Janet Gilmer at the above address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Julie Scanlon at 301–713–1413.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** NWS anticipates consolidating:

- The residual New Orleans WSO with the future New Orleans/Baton Rouge WFO;
- (2) The residual Tulsa WSO with the future Tulsa WFO;
- (3) The residual Oklahoma City WSO with the future Oklahoma City WFO; and
- (4) The residual Phoenix WSO with the future Phoenix WFO.

In accordance with section 706 of Public Law 102–567, the Secretary of Commerce must certify that these consolidations will not result in any degradation of service to the affected areas of responsibility and must publish the proposed consolidation certifications in the FR. The documentation supporting each proposed certification includes the following:

- (1) A draft memorandum by the Meteorologist in Charge recommending the certification, the final of which will be endorsed by the Regional Director and the Assistant Administrator for Weather Services after consideration of public comments and completion of consultation with the Modernization Transition Committee (the Committee);
- (2) A description of local weather characteristics and weather-related concerns which affect the weather services provided within the service area;
- (3) A comparison of the services provided within the service area and the services to be provided after such action:
- (4) A description of any recent or expected modernization of NWS operation which will enhance services in the service area;

- (5) An identification of any area within the affected service area which would not receive coverage (at an elevation of 10,000 feet) by the next generation weather radar network;
- (6) Evidence, based upon operational demonstration of modernized NWS operations, which was considered in reaching the conclusion that no degradation in service will result from such action including the WSR–88D Radar Commissioning Report, User Confirmation of Services Report, and the Decommissioning Readiness Report; and
- (7) A letter appointing the Liaison Officer.

These proposed certifications do not include any report of the Committee which could be submitted in accordance with sections 706(b)(6) and 707© of Public Law 102–567. At its September 14, 1995, meeting, the Committee concluded that the information presented did not reveal any potential degradation of service at any office and decided not to issue any report. The Committee did offer a recommendation on these proposed certifications, which is attached to this notice.

Documentation supporting the proposed certifications is too voluminous to publish in its entirety. Copies of the supporting documentation can be obtained through the contact listed above.

Attached to this Notice are:

- (1) Draft memoranda by the respective Meteorologists in Charge recommending the certifications, and
- (2) The Committee's recommendation on these proposed certifications.

Once all public comments have been received and considered, the NWS will complete consultation with the Committee and determine whether to proceed with the final certifications. If decisions to certify are made, the Secretary of Commerce must publish the final certifications in the FR and transmit the certifications to the appropriate congressional committees prior to consolidating the offices. Elbert W. Friday, Jr.,

Assistant Administrator for Weather Services.

Modernization Transition Committee Completion of Initial Consultation on Proposed Consolidation for Oklahoma City, Phoenix, Tulsa and New Orleans

The Modernization Transition Committee (MTC) has reviewed the proposed consolidation certifications for Oklahoma City, Phoenix, Tulsa, and New Orleans and has determined that these actions will not result in degradation of services. We request documentation that all identified workarounds have been adequately addressed prior to final certification.

In addition, the committee makes the following observations and recommendations to further enhance service to emergency management personnel throughout the nation:

(1) The National Weather Service Modernization Transition Committee has reviewed a number of comments from local emergency management personnel concerning the availability of weather information. These comments have included references to not understanding the information now available, and not being able to afford the corresponding cost.

Although these issues are beyond the purview of this Committee we are concerned with the issues behind these complaints. We feel that every emergency management office should have access to appropriate weather information, regardless of the size and financial condition of the community. Therefore, we urge the National Weather Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration to address these issues as part of their joint project addressing weather information needs of the emergency management community.

Dated: September 14, 1995.

Peter R. Leavitt,

Chair, Modernization Transition Committee.

Memorandum for: Harry S. Hassel, Director,
W/SR

From: Paul S. Trotter, MIC/AM, NWSFO LIX Subject: Recommendation for Consolidation Certification

A change of operations occurred at the New Orleans Weather Service Forecast Office (WSFO) in February, 1994, when most personnel were transferred to the facility of the future New Orleans/Baton Rouge Weather Forecast Office (WFO) in Slidell, Louisiana, to operate the WSR–88D and assume forecast and warning responsibility for the New Orleans/ Baton Rouge service area. At the same time, this office has been designated a Residual Weather Service Office (RWSO) at the original WSFO location to continue operating the existing WSR–57 radar.

After the review of the attached documentation and in my professional judgement, I have determined that consolidation of the old New Orleans Weather Service Forecast Office with the new modernized New Orleans/Baton Rouge Weather Service Forecast Office will not result in any degradation in weather services to the New Orleans service area. This proposed certification is in accordance with the advance announcement provided in the National Implementation Plan. I am requesting your recommendation and approval of the certification in accordance with Section 706 of Public Law 102-567. If you concur with this action, please endorse this recommendation and forward this package to the Assistant Administrator for . Weather Services for final certification. If Dr. Friday, Assistant Administrator for Weather Services, approves, he will forward the certification to the Secretary of Commerce for approval and transmittal to Congress.

My recommendation is based on my review of the evidence and application of the modernization criteria noted for consolidation of a field office.