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Weather Forecaster training for polar lows: international collaboration in the development of Internet-based training

T. Spangler (1), B. Muller (1), and I. Mills (2)

(1) Cooperative Program for Operational Meteorology, Education & Training (COMET®) (2) United Kingdom Meteorological Office, tspang@ucar.edu / Fax: (303) 497-8491 / Phone: (303) 497-8473

The Cooperative Program for Operational Meteorology, Education and Training (COMET®) and the Meteorological Service of Canada (MSC) collaborate regularly to provide science education and training on northern latitude meteorology. As a part of this effort, COMET recently joined with EUMETCAL, a European provider of computer-based meteorological training, to develop distance learning materials on the subject of polar lows. The main goals for this project were to:

- Share content and media development expertise
- Share media products using object-oriented designs
- Lay groundwork for future collaborative project development
- Provide an avenue for scientific collaboration and comparison of two polar low cases

A group of meteorologists and instructional designers from Great Britain, Norway, the United States and Canada was formed to produce the training material. The team produced a Canadian case study targeted for North American forecasters and students, and a Norwegian case study for a European audience. Both case studies are supported by a common set of supporting topics and reference materials. Together the case studies and support materials provide a complete learning resource on the science and

forecasting of these intense, northern latitude storms. The results of the team's work are now used within several meteorological agencies and are freely available for atmospheric science students around the world on the COMET and EUMETCAL websites. The North American case study was recently recognized for its instructional design with a Brandon-Hall Excellence in Learning gold award.

Success for this project was dependent on efficient project management, effective communication, the use of web-based conferencing and organizational tools, and the dedicated effort of all the contributors. Though the team was spread across 11 time zones and made use of data and materials from five different meteorological agencies, the fundamental science and approach to forecasting proved to be the same. This presentation will provide insight into the international development of web-based training materials by explaining some of the tools and techniques utilized, provide an overview of the instructional approach used in the case studies, and demonstrate the online case studies and supporting materials.