

NOMEK - training courses for the Nordic meteorologists

V. Nietosvaara

Finnish Meteorological Institute, Turku, Finland (vesa.nietosvaara@fmi.fi)

NOMEK stands for the Competence Training for Nordic Meteorologists. The Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) have traditionally shared a mutual interest in co-operation in various fields. In meteorological training this collaboration has been realised by organising on-the-job training for the Nordic meteorologists and duty forecasters.

The annual NOMEK courses organised by each Nordic weather service in turn have been arranged since 1995. Since 1996 the course has been supported by Eumetsat, which has also enabled the participation of forecasters from neighbouring Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The course lasts for one week and covers a wide range of topics in forecasting. The objective for the course is to update the forecasters' knowledge on newest developments in remote sensing (satellite and radar), numerical weather prediction and synoptic meteorology. An essential part in the training has been to apply and practise forecasting with a help of case studies and exercises.

NOMEK courses aim for reflecting the changing requirements the forecasters face at their work. The advance of numerical models and the growing amount of available data set bigger and bigger requirements for forecasters to be competent in their work. The contents of the courses should also address these changes and help the forecasters to maintain and develop their skills. Even totally new areas not covered at previous courses need to be tackled. For example presentation and media skills are an essential part of forecaster competency, but they have previously often been ignored in the training.

The pedagogical approach in NOMEK has been re-considered during the recent years. The course participants as experienced forecasters do not represent traditional students who need to be taught something totally new; they personally do contribute a lot for the success of their course. It is the organisers' duty to give opportunities for the experts to share their knowledge with the other experts and to collaborate.

Technologies offering ways to collaborate with external experts help to share the information and experiences worldwide. We introduced some online lessons to and from NOMEK this year, and they expanded the course beyond Scandinavia and Europe. We plan to increase this global component in the future courses and also make more sessions at the course to be accessible for a larger online audience.