



**“We’re on top of this”**

**What model is Dr. Uccellini using to calculate NWS vacancies?**

(February 28, 2016) Dr. Uccellini appeared on The Weather Channel’s Weather Geeks program Sunday morning, understating the number of NWS vacancies and saying, “We’re on top of this... We want to staff up. We want to staff up to have the Weather Service fully staffed as it should be.” NWSEO believes fully staffed offices should be the top priority of the agency.

According to NWSEO tracking, there are more than 600 vacancies in the NWS or roughly 15 percent of the workforce. Some offices are operating with only 60 percent staff; understaffing this severe clearly impacts the NWS mission. Dr. Uccellini stated there are 350 vacancies (8 percent of the workforce) and claimed there were 322 “hiring actions.” A quick review of USA Jobs, at the time of the broadcast, shows only 5 positions are being bid out for the NWS: 2 at the National Water Center, 2 at Headquarters, and 1 in a field office. “We’re on top of this... We want fully staffed offices,” is a good sound bite, yet vacancies have continued to increase for the past five years.

As shown in the graph below, using the latest NWS figures provided to NWSEO, there are 447 more non-management vacancies today than in September 2010. The number of vacancies has steadily increased over the past five years. Dr. Uccellini said NOAA’s Workforce Management Office is responsible for the hiring slowdown. Problems persisting at Workforce Management for more than five years indicate it’s more than a WFMO issue.

**2010-2016  
Non-managerial/Non-supervisory  
NWS Employees**



*NWS graph indicates trend of NWS non-management vacancies*

Dr. Uccellini stated an “all hands on board approach” is used to accomplish the mission during severe weather. He did not elaborate about NWS employees “on board” working 16-18 hour shifts during extreme weather events, or the inability to accomplish service assessments and complete Impact-based Decision Support Services or community outreach. Employees at some understaffed offices are doing IDSS work on their days off, others are working extended periods without a day off. Dr. Uccellini did not comment on the health and work-life issues this labor shortage has created.

The table below shows the unofficial vacancy numbers compiled by NWSEO members. NWSEO will stay on top of the vacancy issue. NWSEO believes having fully staffed offices is critical to protecting the life and property of the American public and to the health and work-life balance of NWS employees.

NWS vacancy summary - updated 2/13/2016			Pending vacancies are included in the totals below		
Region/Organization	Offices reporting	Total offices	Bargaining Unit	Management	Total
Eastern Region WFOs	23	23	43	9	52
Southern Region WFOs	32	32	101	8	109
Central Region WFOs	38	38	83	9	92
Western Region WFOs	24	24	45	10	55
Alaska Region WFOs	3	3	9	3	12
Pacific Region WFOs	2	2	8	2	10
River Forecast Centers	13	13	20	4	24
Center Weather Service Units	20	21	1	2	3
National Centers for Environmental Prediction	10	10	55	7	62
Weather Service Offices / DCOs	15	15	14	0	14
Port Meteorological Officers	7	15	2	0	2
Weather Service Headquarters	1	1	167	21	188
Regional Headquarters	5	6	30	6	36
Pacific Tsunami Warning Center	1	1	3	1	4
National Tsunami Warning Center	1	1	2	0	2
International Tsunami Information Center	1	1	0	1	1
Alaska Aviation Weather Unit	1	1	1	0	1
Spaceflight Meteorology	1	1	0	1	1
FAA Academy	0	1			
FAA Command Center	1	1	2	0	2
<b>NWS total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>670</b>
<b>WFO total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>330</b>
Weather Service HQ includes remote HQ units					
This is not an official NWSEO or NWS document.					

-NWSEO-

**No one cares more for National Weather Service employees than National Weather Service employees.**

**No one works harder for National Weather Service employees than National Weather Service employees.  
We are NWSEO.**