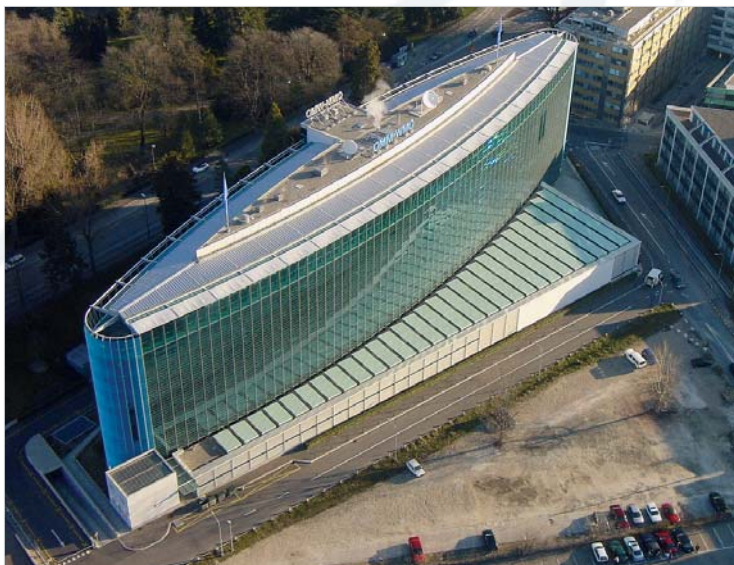


MeteoSwiss – the Geneva site



4
The WMO building where the offices of Météo Genève are located.

The Meteo-Swiss site in Geneva is not only responsible for issuing weather forecasts and severe weather warnings for the French-speaking part of Switzerland and Valais, but also for aviation weather services at Geneva Airport. Thus Météo Genève makes an important contribution towards aviation safety.

In 1927, as a result of the boom in air traffic, MeteoSwiss established an aviation weather section. In 1931, in the course of this development, the meteorological centre was created at Geneva airport. Its task consisted of ensuring weather briefing for the airport. From 1968, pilot briefing took place in an office of the just-finished terminal building. At the same time, a building at the bottom of the runway served as the new observation post. Observations had, in fact, been carried out from the edge of the runway since the 1950's. As a result, aviation weather briefings were located closer to the pilots and the observation post was in the right place to assess aviation weather developments.

Since the 1990's, aviation weather briefing is increasingly done by telephone. However, pilots can also obtain

MeteoSwiss

Tasks and role of the national weather service

The Federal Office for Meteorology and Climatology, MeteoSwiss, performs important tasks for the public, the state and the economy, and has been observing and forecasting the weather since 1881. In addition, we issue severe weather warnings to the cantonal authorities. To do this, we are on duty round the clock and in all regions of the country.

Another of our tasks is to keep climate records, for which we collect, archive and analyse meteorological data. This has resulted in long-term series of measurements which provide a valuable basis for investigating climate change. We are committed to a better understanding of climatic phenomena in both national and international projects.

Our vision

MeteoSwiss is the centre of competence for Alpine meteorology and climatology. In this function, we strive to expand our know-how in the service of society.

Quality management

On 8 December 2004, MeteoSwiss obtained the ISO 9001:2000 certificate for its quality management. We are thus committed to consistently maintaining binding quality standards.

Offices

As well as its headquarters in Zurich, MeteoSwiss is represented at four other sites: Zurich Airport, Geneva, Payerne and Locarno. This regional organization allows us not only to be at the front of weather developments, but also close to our clients.

Some key data

Employees	approx. 270
Observation stations	792
Automatic measuring stations	130
Radar stations	3
Aerological stations	1
Phenological observation stations	160



aviation weather information at the automatic self-briefing stations that have been installed at the most strategic airport locations.

New tasks were soon added to the original ones. Since 1974, Météo Genève has been responsible for issuing wea-



▶
Observation post on the edge of the runway at Geneva-Cointrin airport.



◀
Every year, Météo Genève produces weather forecasts for organizers of open-air events, such as the Bol d'Or.

ther forecasts and severe weather warnings for the French-speaking part of Switzerland and Valais. In this area, we work closely with the Télévision Suisse Romande TSR and the Radio Suisse Romande RSR. Planners of open-air events are also dependent on reliable weather services. In summer, we provide weather forecasts to organizers of events such as the Bol d'Or (yacht race on the Lake of Geneva), the Tour de Suisse (cycle race around Switzerland), the Tour de Romandie (cycle race around Romandie), the Paléo Festival in Nyon (rock festival) and the Montreux Jazz Festival.

Timely warnings thanks to mobile communication

An additional main task is to warn the

population and the cantonal emergency services in the case of impending storms. This involves developing new products that will help us warn our customers of the consequences of dangerous weather situations. One of these products is the so-called flash-orage, which informs our customers of impending thunderstorms by mobile phone. We have been offering flash-orage, to whose development Météo Genève made a significant contribu-



▶
Live broadcast of the Télévision Suisse Romande's weather programme «Tout en région» on the occasion of the inauguration of the new Météo Genève offices in the WMO building.

tion, for the June to October season since 2005.

A further speciality is our climate service, which offers consulting services and produces expert climatological reports for private persons, the state and the economy. Also worthy of note are route forecasts, which our meteorologists produce for balloonists and regattas.

In order to maintain airline operations at Geneva-Cointrin airport, as well as issuing weather reports and warnings, our employees are on duty around the clock. In the future too, we will actively help shape developments in meteorology, climatology and aviation, and thus look after important tasks in the service of the country, the economy and society.

MeteoSwiss and the WMO

Since 2001, the Geneva forecasting and climate service has been located in the World Meteorological Organization WMO building. However, how important is the WMO for MeteoSwiss? The WMO coordinates the activities of weather services worldwide and determines the future orientation of meteorology. MeteoSwiss represents Switzerland at the WMO, and collaborates in various commissions and working groups within the organization. In 2003, the Director of MeteoSwiss was elected onto the WMO's executive council. At the same time, he is president of the Regional Group VI (Europe). These functions allow him to promote the positions of Switzerland and Europe in decision making processes.

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