

# scientific communication in the atmospheric sciences

Louis J. Battan  
President  
American Meteorological Society

The explosive growth of scientific activity has brought with it a problem best illustrated by the bulging bookshelves in the scientific establishments all over the world. The quantity of material being published in all scientific disciplines is becoming so large that it is difficult to keep abreast of new developments. The costs of publication continue to mount and cries are heard from all points of the compass that something should be done about it. But the question is what should it be?

This question has been debated by the Council of the Society on a number of occasions. As we all know, there have been few changes in our practices of scientific communications, and in this regard we are no different from most of our colleagues in other disciplines. One of the chief hindrances to change has been ignorance of how well or how poorly our present practices function. What are the good features, the poor ones? The answers can only come from a systematic study of current information exchange practices.

Such a study of scientific communication by members of the American Meteorological Society recently has been initiated. This very welcome development has come about at the invitation of Dr. William D. Garvey who is

the director of the Center for Research in Scientific Communication at Johns Hopkins University.

Dr. Garvey and his colleagues have made extensive studies of science information exchange in the field of psychology. They pioneered the development of techniques for this purpose and are recognized as authorities. Dr. Donald P. Hornig recently singled out the achievements of this group in performing studies which could serve as the model for other scientific groups.

In the following article Dr. Garvey briefly cites the background for his interest in the American Meteorological Society. We are convinced that the study on which we have jointly embarked will be profitable to all concerned.

The Executive Committee has appointed a Special Committee on Communications Research to work with Dr. Garvey. The following individuals constitute the Committee: Dr. David Atlas (Chairman), Dr. George Cressman, Dr. Glenn R. Hilst, Dr. Phillip D. Thompson and Dr. George Platzman (*ex officio*). In order for this investigation to be successful, the cooperation of all the members will be necessary in supplying information to Dr. Garvey's group on request. We feel confident that the potential benefits will guarantee such cooperation.