

**Opening of GOES-R User Conference**  
**Remarks by Abigail Harper,**  
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**NOAA Satellite and Information Service**  
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- I want to welcome everyone today to the GOES User Conference. This is a key event, bringing together industry, academia, and international partners, and operational users together supporting NOAA's geostationary satellite services and the future uses of geostationary satellite data.
- I appreciate AMS' support of hosting this conference in conjunction with AMS Annual Meeting. This enables us to show users where we are at – so everyone is ready for the next-generation geostationary satellite system – GOES-R.
- It has been my pleasure to lead the GOES-R Program Over the past several months and we are excited with the progress the program has made.
- We have worked hard to successfully progress from the initial design and risk reduction phase to the eve of moving into the full acquisition phase.
- There have been changes to the program along the way – we have changed the management and acquisition strategy and we have deleted a sensor from the program – but we have ensured we have a program that is going to be successful.
- GOES-R is now scoped appropriately with the right amount of budget to execute this program.

- We have completed an independent review of the program along the way. The reviewers agree with us that we have structured GOES-R to be successful.
- The reviews of this program are finished and we are ready to move ahead into acquisition. We are pleased with the status of the program and I personally want to thank the entire GOES-R team, all of the Program Design and Risk Reduction Contractors, and the Independent Review Team.
- The collective effort of all of these players has brought us to a point where we have a program that we think is going to be a success and bring large-scale improvements to users.
- There are challenges with this, as with any satellite program. We have applied lessons learned from other programs, and are working with OMB and the Hill to maintain strong support for NOAA Satellite programs.
- In a world of single-year budgeting, it is critical that we have a consistent message to budgeters, authorizers and appropriators on the importance of stable phasing of funding for satellite program to give them the best opportunity to succeed.
- I am pleased to have Greg Mandt on board as the new GOES-R System Program Director. His background in large-scale acquisitions and strong understanding of the user perspective makes him an ideal candidate for this position. He will talk to you later today about the status of the program and what are the next big steps for us.
- I am also pleased to hear from our international partners over the next two days – geostationary satellites just over the Western Hemisphere are not enough. We rely on our partners for access to data from their satellite to provide “global” geostationary coverage and I look

forward to hearing about their future plans and appreciate their continued partnership.

- Partnership is a key word you will hear over the next two days – partnership with NASA, partnership with user community, partnership with international agencies. No one government agency can do this alone and we appreciate working with partners to bring the best program to the sky to help improve our ability to save lives and property.
- To talk further about partnership, I would like to introduce Mary Kicza, NOAA Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services to talk more about GOES and how it fits into the broader picture of building a Global Earth Observation System of Systems.
- I hope you enjoy the rest of the program.