

## Kevin Cooley - NOAA Federal

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**From:** Kevin Cooley - NOAA Federal  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 7, 2019 8:46 PM  
**To:** Louis Uccellini - NOAA Federal  
**Cc:** Andrew Stern - NOAA Federal; Susan Buchanan - NOAA Federal; George Jungbluth; Mary Erickson - NOAA Federal; John D. Murphy; Chris Vaccaro  
**Subject:** Re: TIME SENSITIVE inquiry from WaPo

I have two thoughts.

First, as an add to the idea of maintaining focus, there is avoid mixed messaging that could be confusing to emergency managers faced with critical decision making. Second, given that the origin point for the message was a NOAA Communications Office directive, perhaps we should direct the Post to the NOAA Communications Office to answer...

Kevin

On Sat, Sep 7, 2019 at 8:43 PM Louis Uccellini - NOAA Federal <[louis.uccellini@noaa.gov](mailto:louis.uccellini@noaa.gov)> wrote:

Andy: I was going to offer a modification to your suggested reply below but paused when I read in a later email that these were your exact words. What was going to insert was the word "ongoing" or "developing" between "other" and "severe". To read "...other ongoing severe ..." or "...other developing severe....".

If you want to stick with original, I understand but I thought your point about the other events was important and I was trying to insert a bit more urgency

Louis

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Dr. Louis W. Uccellini, Director  
NOAA/National Weather Service  
1325 East West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
[301.713.9095](tel:301.713.9095)

On Sep 7, 2019, at 8:20 PM, Andrew Stern - NOAA Federal <[andrew.stern@noaa.gov](mailto:andrew.stern@noaa.gov)> wrote:

Susan,

I concur with your assessment. However, it was bigger than just Dorian. We had wildfires ongoing in the west, developing tropical systems in both the Atlantic and Pacific basins and had other areas of thunderstorms to watch. I would modify it slightly. Our mission is supposed to be apolitical.

"NWS leadership sent these directives to field staff so they (and the entire agency)

could maintain operational focus on Dorian and other severe weather hazards without distraction."

On Sat, Sep 7, 2019 at 8:12 PM Susan Buchanan - NOAA Federal <[susan.buchanan@noaa.gov](mailto:susan.buchanan@noaa.gov)> wrote:

We may not get clearance to respond, but if Julie approves, I suggest something simple like this:

"NWS leadership sent these directives to field staff so they (and the entire agency) could maintain operational focus on Dorian without distraction."

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Susan Buchanan  
Director of Public Affairs  
National Weather Service  
301-427-9000

On Sat, Sep 7, 2019 at 8:06 PM Louis Uccellini - NOAA Federal <[louis.uccellini@noaa.gov](mailto:louis.uccellini@noaa.gov)> wrote:

George et al; Including Andy if John is still in the air: Need to work with Susan and Chris on this one. Louis

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Dr. Louis W. Uccellini, Director  
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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Freedman, Andrew" <[Andrew.Freedman@washpost.com](mailto:Andrew.Freedman@washpost.com)>  
**Date:** September 7, 2019 at 7:49:35 PM EDT  
**To:** Christopher Vaccaro - NOAA Federal <[christopher.vaccaro@noaa.gov](mailto:christopher.vaccaro@noaa.gov)>, Scott Smullen - NOAA Federal <[scott.smullen@noaa.gov](mailto:scott.smullen@noaa.gov)>, "[louis.uccellini@noaa.gov](mailto:louis.uccellini@noaa.gov)" <[louis.uccellini@noaa.gov](mailto:louis.uccellini@noaa.gov)>, "Itkowitz, Colby" <[Colby.Itkowitz@washpost.com](mailto:Colby.Itkowitz@washpost.com)>, "[susan.buchanan@noaa.gov](mailto:susan.buchanan@noaa.gov)" <[susan.buchanan@noaa.gov](mailto:susan.buchanan@noaa.gov)>  
**Cc:** "Samenow, Jason" <[Jason.Samenow@washpost.com](mailto:Jason.Samenow@washpost.com)>  
**Subject:** TIME SENSITIVE inquiry from WaPo

Hi NWS press folks and Director Uccellini,

This is for a Washington Post story \*\*running imminently online and in print on Sunday.\*\*

On Sept. 1 and again on Sept. 4, NWS personnel received a guidance not to provide opinions on national level social media posts in the media and to stick with NHC forecasts if questions arise about the posts.

Staff understood this to be a response to President Trump's Alabama comments

and that they were essentially being told not to contradict the president.

Can you respond to this and explain the reason behind sending these dual directives?

Please send any responses to Colby and myself. I'm cc'ing Jason as well who has been working on this story.

Thank you and all the best,  
-Andrew

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NOAA/National Weather Service  
Office: 301-427-9120  
Cell: (b)(6)

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**Kevin Cooley**  
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301-427-9810 (office)