CONTINUOUS METEOROLOGICAL TRAINING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE USE OF VISIT VIEW.

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The South African Weather Service appoints scientific personnel as weather observers or meteorologists (researchers, climatologists or forecasters) depending on the training received.

**Weather Observers:**

Weather Observers are trained by Weather Service Personnel. Bursaries are allocated to matriculants/ grade 12 that have passed their mathematics and physical sciences. They are then trained for one year in all aspects of weather observations as needed by the South African Weather Service.

These personnel are located in 18 office right through South Africa (see Figure 1). We are in a process of refreshing their meteorological knowledge and to bring them the latest information on observation. The only way to give a lecture to all the offices simultaneously and to save time is to use visit view.

![All OBS STATIONS IN South Africa](image)

*Figure 1: All weather observing station in South Africa. The red dots are the forecasting offices.*

**Meteorologists:**
A post graduate qualification is a requirement for employment as a meteorologist within the South African Weather Service and to address these needs, training is provided to students in collaboration with various Universities within South Africa (Cape Town, Wits and Pretoria universities) This is done on a partnership basis because of the low student numbers required by the industry. See Figure 2 for the Training outline in South Africa.

The specialties that are addressed are Weather Forecasting, Climatology and Research fields like Numerical Weather Prediction, Seasonal Modeling and Physical Meteorology.

As most of these specialties have a large practical aspect, most of the courses are given through the University of Pretoria with the majority of the lecturers being employed by the South African Weather Service itself.

After graduation these personnel is posted to their positions. Most of the personnel is in Pretoria, but there are big forecasting offices in OR Tambo International airport, Bloemfontein, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Cape Town. Visit View is installed at all these offices and they can register individually for the courses (international) as well. This will encourage them to register for the EUMETSAT visit view international courses as well. These personnel are also encouraged to develop their own visit view presentation for the other stations.

Figure 2: The training careers in the South African Weather Service
**Neighboring countries:**

An international training session was held in South Africa in March 2008 and was sponsored by EUMETSAT. Representatives from Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique as well as some of SAWS forecasters attended. The first three days training on visit view was given and on the last two days training on the use of Moodle was given. On the Wednesday a successful lecture were given to Niamey and Niamey gave a successful lecture to South Africa. All representatives were given the software on CD’s and hard drives. Namibia was successful to install the software. Most of the others stated they had port problems. If communications can be established, weather discussions can become a reality between the neighbours.