



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
The Under Secretary of Commerce  
for Oceans and Atmosphere  
Washington, D.C. 20230

SEP 29 2015

Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., Vice Admiral (Retired)  
Chairman  
Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing  
Regional Association  
P.O. Box 13856  
Charleston, SC 29422

Dear Admiral Lautenbacher:

Thank you for your letter to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) regarding National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) buoys 41009 and 41010 off the coast of Cape Canaveral.

The NDBC has maintained these buoys for more than 25 years, with full sponsorship and funding support from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the U.S. Air Force (USAF). NASA and the USAF have discontinued sponsorship and funding for the buoys beginning October 2014.

As of the date of this letter, both buoys are fully functional and transmitting data. NDBC intends to leave the buoys in place to continue to transmit data until they reach the end of their expected operational life in 2016. We recognize the importance of these buoys and all ocean observations to the maritime community and those with responsibility for forecasts and warnings.

As you know, the current budget climate is very challenging. NOAA is evaluating its overall ocean observing requirements and activities, including buoy observations inside its portfolio, and those within and associated with the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS), to determine the most efficient strategy for their execution. I appreciate your suggestion that the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association receive additional funding through IOOS. NOAA is exploring options for funding future operations and maintenance of these buoys.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "KDS", written over a horizontal line.

Kathryn D. Sullivan, Ph.D.  
Under Secretary of Commerce  
for Oceans and Atmosphere

