

World's top minds in lightning science meet again

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Vaisala is the proud sponsor of the 20th International Lightning Detection Conference (ILDC). This conference was first held in Tucson, Arizona, in 1979 as a small gathering of the world's top minds in lightning science.

The first Lightning Detection Workshop hosted a total attendance of 27. In 1990, the conference attendance grew to over eighty. The event was renamed the International Lightning Detection Conference, and represented eleven countries worldwide. Presenters and attendees, including researchers, engineers, industrial specialists, professionals and students, have since come from all over the world to share a common passion for understanding lightning and how it affects the world we live in.

Over the years the ILDC conference has provided a forum for collaborative partnership opportunities in the meteorological world. University research projects have been generated from ideas produced at the conference. Lightning safety information and applications have grown as a public necessity. Collaborations such as the Vaisala National Lightning Detection Network[®](NLDN) overlaid onto Sigmet products were developed for the ILDC. Global lightning network partnerships were created. Most importantly,

the ILDC has served as an opportunity for focus groups and for global market application issues to be discussed when the world specialists gather in one location.

Many meetings occur both during the week and also the weeks surrounding the conferences. In addition, the collaboration of lightning customers and lightning science professionals during the conference, both for geographic and market applications, has significantly contributed to the greater understanding of lightning.

As meteorological applications of lightning data have grown, the first International Lightning Meteorology Conference (ILMC) was held in 2006. The ILMC was created due to the increasing size of the meteorological sessions at ILDC and the importance of the topic for Vaisala. Vaisala Thunderstorm believes this is a great forum to forge stronger relationships with the international meteorological community. Formerly a three-day workshop, the full 2008 ILDC/ILMC conference is now five days.

ILDC: 21–23 April 2008 in Tucson, Arizona, USA

The ILDC is now a bi-annual conference that provides a forum for presentations and discussions related to research

Call for ILDC history

Did you participate in an earlier conference and have a memory or photograph that you would like to share? Vaisala would like to create a special display at the 20th ILDC and welcomes your thoughts at ildc@vaisala.com. Thank you in advance.

and applications development in lightning detection technologies. ILDC is the premier forum for presentations and discussions related to research, emerging trends and case studies that contribute to a deeper understanding of lightning detection information in asset and facility protection, human safety, electric power distribution and transmission, forestry applications and telecommunications performance.

ILMC: 24–25 April 2008 in Tucson, Arizona, USA

The ILMC focuses on applications of lightning data related to thunderstorm nowcasting for the meteorological and aviation communities, oceanic extratropical and tropical cyclone nowcasting, and data assimilation into numerical weather prediction models. A meteorological perspective on the topics of lightning prediction and nowcasting the CG lightning threat is discussed. Meteorological uses of lightning detected by LF

In 2004, the ILDC was held in Finland.



cloud-to-ground, VHF total lightning, and VLF long-range lightning networks and single-point sensors are also covered.

Vaisala - the lightning expert

Vaisala is a well-established authority in lightning and owns and operates the U.S. National Lightning Detection Network® (NLDN), and operates the Canadian Lightning Detection Network (CLDN) for Environment Canada. The NLDN and CLDN data significantly contributes to human safety and cost-savings through improved damage response times and enhanced lightning mitigation designs.

The combined NLDN and CLDN network is the most accurate and reliable large-scale lightning detection network in the world. The data is used in applications such as weather forecasting, electric power utilities, air traffic control, insurance, power-sensitive manufacturing and processing operations, hazardous materials handling, forestry, golf and outdoor recreation, and shuttle and satellite launch facilities. ■

Further information:
www.vaisala.com/ildc

Article in the Arizona Daily Star from 1981 featuring lightning detection pioneers Martin Uman and Philip Krider.



Previous conference highlights:

1979: First Lightning Detection Workshop in Tucson, Arizona.

1981: Attendees received a special presentation by Dr. Philip E Krider: "History of Lightning Direction Finding Since 1908".

1982–1989: Kennedy Space Center is frequently at the center of new technologies and applications of lightning detection.

Regional networks merge into the NLDN for national scale applications, and provide the context for regional studies.

Lightning studies greatly expanded to a very broad range of applications in meteorology, utilities and other lightning-sensitive fields.

1990: Conference renamed International Lightning Detection Conference.

1991–1997: Medical and safety topics received growing attention and separate sessions at ILDC. Growing recognition of total lightning networks as appropriate for high-resolution lightning applications.

1998: ILDC Conference Theme: Lightning: What more can it tell us?

2002: Dr. Mary Ann Cooper received a special award for leadership in efforts to raise lightning safety awareness, participation in organizations and assistance to many lightning victims and their families.

Ronald L. Holle of Vaisala was presented with an individual award for his work as a national lightning safety spokesperson at NOAA, and his research, technical publications and efforts in private industry.

2004: The conference was held at Vaisala's headquarters in Helsinki, Finland.

2006: First International Lightning Meteorology Conference held in Tucson, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E Krider presented his 19th keynote address and welcome speech to the conference attendees.