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PNSWSH

Public Information Statement 17-11 Updated  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
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To:           Subscribers:  
              -NOAA Weather Wire Service  
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              Other NWS Partners, Users and Employees

From:         William Bauman  
              Chief, Aviation and Space Weather Services Branch

Subject: Updated: Soliciting Comments on the Experimental Aviation Surface  
Forecast and Aviation Cloud Forecast Graphics through April 30, 2017

Updated to correct survey link:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=ASFACFGraphics>

The NWS Aviation Weather Center (AWC) in Kansas City, MO, is accepting comments on the Experimental Aviation Surface Forecast and Aviation Cloud Forecast graphics through April 30, 2017.

The experimental Aviation Surface Forecast and Aviation Cloud Forecast graphics are snapshot images derived from a subset of the aviation weather forecasts valid for the continental United States (CONUS) and coastal waters used within the Experimental Graphical Forecasts for Aviation (GFA) interactive web-based display (which will become operational effective 4/13/17; see Service Change Notice 17-31):

[https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/pdfs/scn17-3lawc\\_exp\\_graphics.pdf](https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/pdfs/scn17-3lawc_exp_graphics.pdf)

The static images are provided every three hours for one CONUS projection and nine regional projections with three-hourly forecasts of Surface (predominant weather, visibility, wind) and cloud coverage and layer (bases and tops) information out to 18 hours. Details of the forecast graphics can be found in the Product Description Document (PDD):

[http://products.weather.gov/PDD/PDD\\_AviationForecastGraphics\\_4\\_17.pdf](http://products.weather.gov/PDD/PDD_AviationForecastGraphics_4_17.pdf)

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), pursuant to Title 49 United States Code Section 44720, established requirements for this weather information and service, which is necessary for the safe and efficient conduct of operations in the National Airspace System. These graphics provide a low-bandwidth alternative to the GFA interactive web-based display. The static images are intended for FAA Flight Service Stations (FSS) providers, commercial and General Aviation pilots, operators, briefers and dispatchers with limited Internet access.

The Experimental Aviation Surface Forecast and Aviation Cloud Forecast Graphics can be found at:

<https://www.AviationWeather.gov/gfa/plot>

Additionally, these Portable Network Graphics (PNG) will be available over NOAA Port/Satellite Broadcast Network. World Meteorological Organization (WMO) header information will be as follows:

T1T2A1A2ii CCCC

CCCC is KPCI (Aviation Weather Center)

T1 = Q (Regional Static Graphic)

T2 specifies the forecast graphic as follows:

= I for the Aviation Clouds Forecast Graphic

= Z for the Aviation Surface Forecast Graphic

A1 = T (Northern Hemisphere)

A2 specifies the forecast time as follows:

= B for the 3-hour forecast

= C for the 6-hour forecast

= D for the 9-hour forecast

= E for the 12-hour forecast

= F for the 15-hour forecast

= G for the 18-hour forecast

When T2 = I, ii specifies the regional domain of the Aviation Clouds Forecast Graphic as follows:

= 00 for Continental United States

= 01 for Northeastern United States

= 02 for Eastern United States

= 03 for Southeastern United States

= 04 for North Central United States

= 05 for Central United States

= 06 for South Central United States

= 07 for Northwestern United States

= 08 for Western United States

= 09 for Southwestern United States

When T2 = Z, ii specifies the regional domain of the Aviation Surface Forecast Graphic as follows:

= 90 for Continental United States

= 91 for Northeastern United States

= 92 for Eastern United States

= 93 for Southeastern United States

= 94 for North Central United States

= 95 for Central United States

= 96 for South Central United States

= 97 for Northwestern United States

= 98 for Western United States

= 99 for Southwestern United States

Although requirements for the underlying meteorological information currently provided through the legacy text Area Forecast (FA) have not changed, the FAA recognizes that, given modern advances within NWS, the legacy text FA is no longer the best source of en-route flight planning weather information. Retiring the FA and transitioning to more modern digital and graphical forecasts will allow the NWS to focus the efforts of

forecasters on maximizing operational benefit to aviation end users, resulting in improved weather information to decision-makers.

Based on comments received by FAA and other NWS users on this proposed change, NWS plans to discontinue production of FAs. This will occur once the experimental GFA interactive web-based display, and the experimental Aviation Surface Forecast and Aviation Clouds Forecast graphics are operational and any concerns identified within submitted comments have been addressed. Formal public notification will be provided in advance of the action to discontinue the FAs.

Comments will be accepted through April 30, 2017, on the experimental Aviation Surface Forecast and Aviation Cloud Forecast graphics as a low-bandwidth alternative to the Experimental Graphical Forecasts for Aviation interactive web-based display, and digital/graphical alternative to surface weather and cloud information contained in the textual Area Forecasts for CONUS. Comments may be submitted via the survey link:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=ASFACFGraphics>

If you have any questions regarding the experimental Aviation Surface Forecast and Aviation Cloud Forecast Graphics, please contact:

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National Public Information Statements are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification/archive>

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