

WSR-88D Tropical Cyclone Operations Plan

05/09/2008 Build 9 Systems

- This plan is designed to be used as an *operational reference*. Although the basic plan as presented here has been shown to be effective in many tropical cyclone events, local modifications to the plan can and should be made as required. Be sure to consult with your local Unit Radar Committee (URC) in advance concerning any changes which result in system wide modifications. Pre-hurricane URC agreements will allow changes to be made operationally as needs arise.
- Colors are used for specific purposes in this document. **Blue** is used to indicate a hyperlink or an alphanumeric value entered in an adaptation data menu. The hyperlinks can link to a different location in this document, to an e-mail address, or to an Internet address. **Red** is for a menu or menu selection.

There are two types of NOTES in this document. A **Green** font **NOTE** is an informational note. A box with a **Yellow** background is for a **very** special note, generally for operational guidance.

Purple or **brown** is occasionally used to make individual words stand out.

- One of the most important parts of this plan for both Class 1 (associated) users and Class 2 (non-associated) users (e.g., the National Hurricane Center, NHC) is the availability of the **256-data level Velocity** products at multiple elevation angles.

NOTE

*While temporary additions of Generation List products and adaptable parameters can be made on-site, each time the RPG is rebooted or the VCP/weather mode is changed, the edited Generation List will be replaced with the baseline. Therefore, it is suggested that you record these changes manually or backup your local "default" adaptable parameters before implementing any changes and document all changes that are made. The "**Save Adaptation Data**" procedure is in EHB 6-520 Table 4-37.*

NOTE

Execute procedures 1, 2, and 3 (below) before doing any

other procedures. Nearly every procedure (or section) of this document assumes that the system is already in precipitation mode and will remain that way until the tropical cyclone event ends.

- After the tropical cyclone threat has passed, return all parameters back to their proper or "default" values. The **"Restore Adaptation Data"** procedure is in EHB 6-520 Table 4-38. **Keep this information near the MSCF in case the data need to be restored.** If you are entering the data manually, refer to the current *"WSR-88D Guidance on Adaptable Parameters Handbook, Volume 1, RPG Refresh"* for system-wide defaults and your own notes for your site-specific ones. The Guidance on Adaptable Parameters can be accessed at <http://www.roc.noaa.gov/ssb/sysdoc/Operations.asp> (which requires a security log-in).
- All recommended adaptable parameter changes in this Plan are performed by the WFO using the URC level of change authority. If the URC-level password is required in any of the procedures, click on the padlock button in the upper right corner of the window; in the password pop-up window, select the **URC** radio button, type in the password, and then press the **<Enter>** key. There are no commands requiring Agency- or ROC-level passwords in this document.
- This Tropical Cyclone Operations Plan has been designed for sites that have at least Build **9** software. If there is a question about the RPG software build being used, look at the top line of the RPG Control/Status Window (the main graphical user interface, also known as the HCI). For example, the latest software build might be shown as "RPG Build 9.1: Wednesday May 02, 2007 22:38:28 UT" (although the build number, date, and time may differ). To determine the build number of all radars using WSR-88D software, go to <https://www.roc.noaa.gov/ops/build.asp>. (Access to this site may be restricted.)
- For questions or comments that need an immediate response, contact the [WSR-88D Hotline](tel:800-643-3363) (800-643-3363) at the Radar Operations Center. Other questions about this document can be addressed to Colin.J.McAdie@noaa.gov (National Hurricane Center) or Daniel.S.Berkowitz@noaa.gov (Radar Operations Center).

Here is a brief summary of the recommended procedures in this document:

1. [Generator Fuel](#)
2. [Reinitializing Memory and Precipitation Accumulations](#)
3. [Clutter Suppression](#)
 - a. [Setting Up a Minimal Clutter Suppression Region \(CSR\)](#)

- b. [Selecting an Existing Clutter Suppression Region File](#)
- 4. [Mode and VCP Selection](#)
 - a. [Mode Selection Function Settings](#)
 - b. [VCP Selection](#)
- 5. [Mitigation of Range Folding](#)
- 6. [Velocity Measurement Increment](#)
- 7. [Algorithms](#)
 - a. [Mesocyclone Algorithm Optimization](#)
 - b. [Mesocyclone Detection Algorithm Optimization](#)
 - c. [Tornado Detection Algorithm Optimization](#)
 - d. [Precipitation Estimate Optimization](#)
 - i. [Z/R Relationship](#)
 - ii. [MXPRA](#)
 - iii. [Checking Precipitation Processing Adaptable Parameters](#)
- 8. [Selectable Product Parameters](#)
 - a. [Velocity Data Display Levels](#)
 - i. [16-Level Products](#)
 - ii. [256-Level Products](#)
 - b. [Precipitation Product Display Levels](#)
- 9. [Archive Level II](#)
- 10. [AWIPS Data Archiving](#)
- 11. [AWIPS Data Requests from Adjacent Radars](#)
- 12. [Communications Backup](#)
- 13. [AWIPS Minimum RPS Lists](#)

The [Return to Contents](#) hypertext link has been added for your convenience after each procedure to enable a quick return to this Table of Contents.

A. At the WSR-88D RPG Human Computer Interface (HCI):

NOTE

All procedures for the RPG HCI in sections 1-9 (below) begin from the HCI Main Menu, the RPG Control/Status window, and may require the URC-level password.

1. Generator Fuel

Well prior to the onset of tropical cyclone rain bands, ensure that the RDA emergency power generator fuel level is maximized. It may be several days, or even weeks, before commercial power is restored in the aftermath of a significant tropical cyclone, and fuel delivery will likely be delayed. To check the fuel level:

- On the right side of the HCI, in the Applications column, select **RDA Performance Data**, then select **Equipment Shelter**.
(Check % of **Converted Generator Fuel Level** and order fuel as deemed necessary.)
[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

2. Reinitializing Memory and Precipitation Accumulations

NOTE

You can select Hydromet along with Product Database in procedure 2a. to initialize both the product database and precipitation accumulations in one procedure.

2a. Task failures have occurred during at least one tropical cyclone due to overutilized memory. This typically happens when the RPG has been running for a long period of time (i.e., several weeks) without a system restart. This restart should be done prior to onset of the tropical cyclone.

- At the HCI, click on **RPG Control** and a menu window will appear.
- In the RPG Control window, click **Shutdown**.
- Click **Yes** in the warning popup window to confirm your Shutdown command.
- Wait for the **State** (at the top of the RPG Control window) to show "SHUTDOWN."
- Unlock the Initialization Control screen using the **URC** password.
- Select **Product Database** under the State Data group.
- You can also select **Hydromet (excludes USP Database)** under the Hydromet group.
- Click on **Activate** and confirm this action in the warning popup window.
- Select **Startup** under Software near the top of the RPG Control window.
- Confirm the Startup command.

2b. Reset the precipitation products to begin accumulating rainfall at the onset of the tropical event. To accomplish this, certain buffers used by precipitation processing need to be reinitialized.

NOTE

You can execute precipitation reinitialization without doing a Shutdown of RPG applications.

To reset precipitation accumulations *only*:

- At the HCI, click on **RPG Control**, and a menu will appear.
- Ensure the RPG **State** is OPERATE, STANDBY, or SHUTDOWN.
- Unlock the Initialization Control screen using the **URC** password.
- Select **Hydromet (excludes USP Database)** in the Hydromet group under Initialization Control.
- Click on **Activate** and confirm this command in the warning popup window.
- **Close** the RPG Control window.

2c. Ensure the parameters for starting and ending accumulations have been set to reasonable numbers.

NOTE

The “Reflectivity (dBZ) Representing Significant Rain” (RAINZ) should be left at the default value of 20.0 dBZ, considered to be the lowest dBZ for liquid precipitable reflectivity. “Rain Area Threshold” (RAINA) should be the normal area of non-meteorological residual reflectivity of at least 20 dBZ (i.e., RAINZ) after proper clutter suppression has been done. An appropriate setting for RAINA should be determined locally during fair weather. Use the value for Significant Rain Area Detected in the Precipitation Status window as a guide. (This is the value being used by the Precipitation Processing Subsystem, as reflected in the Supplementary Precipitation Data (SPD) alphanumeric product, WSRSPDxxx, where xxx is the three-letter radar identifier.)

- Select the box to the right of **Precip Status:** (below the USERS icon).
- Read and record the value from the Precipitation Status window for **Significant Rain Area Detected**.
- Click on **Modify Parameters**.
- Unlock this screen using the URC password.
- Set **Reflectivity (dBZ) Representing Significant Rain [RAINZ]** to **20.0** dBZ.

- Set **Area with Reflectivity Exceeding Significant Rain Threshold [RAINA]** to a value (probably **greater than 80** km²) that is typical for the non-precipitation residual clutter area for your site (i.e., not eliminated from base reflectivity by clutter suppression in procedure 3 below).
 - Click on **Save** and then **Yes** to confirm the Save command.
 - **Close** the Algorithms (Adaptation Item: Hydromet Preprocessing) screen.
 - **Close** the Precipitation Status window.
- [{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

3. Clutter Suppression

Use **“Bypass Map”** whenever possible. This will improve rainfall estimates and overall algorithm performance. Compare base reflectivity with the Clutter Likelihood of Reflectivity (CLR) to see where anomalous propagation (AP) ground returns have been identified. If significant clutter or AP becomes apparent in the CLR product or base data products (reflectivity, velocity, and spectrum width), change to a Clutter Suppression Region (CSR) file that has forced suppression in the region(s) of concern. (Note that **Clutter Suppression Regions affect nearly all products.**)

NOTE

Refrain from using “All Bins” suppression everywhere, because it will often result in excessive suppression along the zero isodop. Never use “All Bins” at batch cut elevation angles (i.e., those above 1.65°) nor in the 200-series VCPs.

3a. Setting Up a Minimal Clutter Suppression Region (CSR)

If you need to "build" (then download) a minimal CSR, the following commands will produce one with the Bypass Map in control which applies suppression to known ground targets.

- On the right side of the HCI (the Applications column), select **Clutter Regions**.
- Select **File**.
- Select **New**.
- Select the **Segment: 1** (Elevation Segment One) button and edit the table to agree with the one below.
- Select each of the higher elevation segments as applicable for your site, and do the same editing.
- Select **Save As**, give this file a name (e.g., **“Minimum”**), and click **Accept** button.
- Select **Close** for the Clutter Region Files.
- Select **Download** in the main Clutter Regions window.
- Confirm changes and **Close**.

Example of a Minimal Clutter Suppression Region
With Bypass Map in Control for Five Elevation Segments

Region	Start Azimuth (deg)	Stop Azimuth (deg)	Start Range (nm)	Stop Range (nm)	Select Code
1	0	360	1	275	Bypass Map
2	0	360	1	275	Bypass Map
3	0	360	1	275	Bypass Map
4	0	360	1	275	Bypass Map
5	0	360	1	275	Bypass Map

3b. Selecting an Existing Clutter Suppression Region File

- On the right side of the HCI (the Applications column), select **Clutter Regions**.
- Select **File**, then click on **Minimum** (assuming clutter suppression region file "Minimum" is a pre-built minimal suppression file). (Substitute for "Minimum" the name or number of the equivalent file at your site.)
- Click on the **Open** button to open the selected file.
- **Close** the Clutter Region Files window. The selected file should now be displayed.
- **Download**, confirm download, and **Close** the main Clutter Regions window.

NOTE

If a set of clutter suppression regions has been invoked to reduce ground returns from anomalous propagation (AP), check this frequently to determine when minimum suppression can be used.

Refer to EHB 6-521 Section 3.8 for more details on Clutter Regions and how to invoke or download them.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

4. Mode and Volume Coverage Pattern (VCP) Selection

4a. Mode Selection Function

The Mode Selection Function (MSF) uses computed reflectivity area above a specified threshold to determine when a system can automatically switch into Precipitation Mode and/or switch into Clear Air Mode. In order to ensure that automatic MSF selections don't override the VCP you have selected, put the Precipitation Switching and Clear Air Switching selections in **Manual**.

- Select **Control** in the RDA icon on the HCI.
- Select **VCP** in the RDA Control/Status window.
- Select the **Manual** buttons under both Clear Air Switching and Precipitation Switching.
- Select the **View/Edit** button under Mode Automation Status.
- Select the **Modify Parameters** button.
- Unlock the padlock with the URC radio button and password.
- Select **Yes** in the "Ignore Mode Conflict Duration?" line.
- Select **Save**.
- Confirm this selection and **Close** this window.
- **Close** the Mode Automation Status window.
- **Close** the VCP and Mode Control window.
- **Close** the RDA Control/Status window.

4b. VCP Selection

The two main considerations in VCP selection are the **strength** of the tropical cyclone and the **range** from the radar to the center of the cyclone. Build 9 software includes three new VCPs: 211, 212, and 221. These VCPs greatly reduce range-folded Doppler data (or "purple haze"), which is often a major problem in tropical cyclones. A reduction in range-folding results in better velocities and, thus, better performance of algorithms based on velocity (such as clutter likelihood, which is used in precipitation processing).

Use VCP 221 when the center of the cyclone comes within range in order to alleviate range folding. VCPs 221 and 121 have the same elevation angles as VCP 21, but they use multiple PRF sampling, which improves velocity product usefulness by reducing range folding and providing more accurate velocity dealiasing.

For better interrogation of local convection, use VCP 211 (more upper tilts than VCP 121) or 212 (faster updates and more lower tilts than either VCP 121 or 211). All of these have good range unfolding.

PRFs are not editable for the bottom two elevation angles of VCP 211 and 221 nor for the three elevation angles of VCP 212 that are below 1.65°. PRFs are not editable for any tilt in VCP 121. For more details, see Table 3-2, the "Quick Reference VCP Comparison Table for RPG Operators" in EHB 6-521 (Operations Instructions, Radar Product Generation (RPG) Refresh for Build 9 software) or on the laminated sheet delivered with the Build 9 software installation kit.

- Select **Control** in the RDA icon on the HCI.
- Select **VCP** in the RDA Control/Status window.
- Unlock the padlock with the URC radio button and password.
- Select “Download VCP from RPG”: **221** (or **211** or **212** or **121**) (“remote” VCPs)
- Confirm and **Close** this window.

Local VCPs 11 and 21 and remote VCP 121 are defined with a 0.97 kt Velocity Measurement Increment (VMI), which limits velocity measurements to +/- approximately 122 kt and (except for VCP 121) a #5 PRF selection, which restricts the unambiguous range to 79 nm. To change the VMI to display winds in excess of +/-122 kt, refer to procedure [6](#). (Procedure [8a](#) describes how to change the velocity scales.) To increase the unambiguous range to 94 nm in a VCP other than 121, refer to procedure [5](#).

NOTE

If you see “Pedestal Dynamic Fault” messages, contact your electronics maintenance technician.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

5. Mitigation of Range Folding

RPG HCI operators have the ability to move the maximum unambiguous range (R_{max}) out to a maximum distance of **94 nm** or in to a minimum distance of **63 nm** by adjusting the PRF when allowed by the VCPs described above. This *may* become necessary to improve velocity products (particularly near the center of the storm) as the tropical cyclone approaches. The "Download" command invokes a "Remote" VCP (i.e., ones stored in the RPG). Remote VCPs 11, 12, and 21 are defined with a PRF of 4 ($R_{max} = 94$ nm) by default. When Auto PRF is Off, the default unambiguous range will remain at 94 nm for remote VCPs 11, 12, and 21. The range/PRF can then be altered in order to see velocities around the center or eye of the storm. **Local** VCPs 11 and 21 (i.e., ones stored at the RDA) are defined with $R_{max} = 79$ nm.

NOTE

The NHC prefers the R_{max} with sufficient range to provide velocity data near the eye or center of a tropical depression, tropical storm, or hurricane. However, local needs may dictate otherwise, and will take precedence. Therefore, a VCP with operator-specified PRF (11, 12, or 21) may need to be selected to mitigate range folding in a WFO’s region of concern. VCP 121 does not use Auto

PRF. VCPs 211, 212, and 221 only use Auto PRF in Batch Cut tilts (i.e., above the 1.65° elevation angle).

- Select **Control** in the HCI's RDA icon.
- Select **VCP** in the RDA Control/Status window.
- Toggle Auto PRF **Off** and confirm this action in the popup window.
- Under Download VCP from RPG, select **121** (or **211, 212, 221, 11, 12, or 21**).
- Confirm this selection and **Close** this window.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

6. Velocity Measurement Increment

If velocities are expected to exceed **122 kt**, increase the Velocity Measurement Increment (VMI) from 0.97 kt to 1.94 kt.

NOTE

Ensure the VMI is the last change you make when modifying a VCP (i.e., in "Modify Current VCP"). Otherwise, changes will be lost when a VCP change is made or the system is rebooted.

- Ensure **Auto PRF** is **Off** (as displayed in the information lines below the Users icon).
- Select **Control** in the HCI's RDA icon.
- Select **VCP** in the RDA Control/Status window.
- Unlock the padlock with the URC radio button and password.
- Select **221** (**211, 212, 121**, or other desired VCP number) on the "Precipitation:" line under "Download VCP from RPG."
- Confirm that you want to download this VCP.
- Click on the **Modify Current VCP** button.
- Toggle Velocity Increment (top right) to **1.94 kts**.
- **Save** this setting, **Download** it, confirm changes, and **Close** the RDA Control/Status window.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

7. Algorithm Adaptable Parameter Changes

NOTE

Procedures 7a through 7c will independently increase the radar's detection efficiency for small, shallow circulations typically found in tropical cyclones. Precipitation algorithm changes (procedures 7di and

7dii) will result in more realistic rainfall estimates during tropical weather situations.

7a. Mesocyclone Algorithm Optimization

The Threshold Pattern Vector (TPV) within the Mesocyclone algorithm may be reduced to **6** to improve detection of small diameter features; however, a greater number of false alarms may also be generated.

- Select **Products** in the HCI's RPG icon.
- From the RPG Products menu, choose **Algorithms**, then select Adaptation Item: **Mesocyclone** from the drop-down menu.
- Unlock the padlock with the URC radio button and password.
- Change **Min # Pattern Vectors [TPV]** value from **10** to **6**.
- **Save**, confirm changes, and **Close** this menu.

7b. Mesocyclone Detection Algorithm Optimization

The Mesocyclone Detection Algorithm (MDA) produces a Meso Detection (MD, #141) product and a Meso Detection Data Array (DMD, #149) product. The strength rank of the mesocyclone circulation should be lowered to enable detection of weaker circulations within the tropical cyclone. Be aware that a greater number of false alarms may be generated.

- From the RPG Products menu, choose **Algorithms**, then select Adaptation Item: **MDA** from the drop-down menu.
- Unlock the padlock with the URC radio button and password.
- Change **Minimum Display Filter Rank** value from **5** to **4** (or, possibly, **3**).
- **Save**, confirm changes, and **Close** this menu.

7c. Tornado Detection Algorithm Optimization

Parameters within the Tornado Detection Algorithm (TDA) should be changed to increase the probability of detecting weak or distant tornadoes; however, a greater number of false alarms will also be generated. For more information see "*Spratt, S. M., D. W. Sharp, P. Welsh, A. Sandrik, F. Alsheimer, and C. Paxton, 1997: A WSR-88D assessment of tropical cyclone outer rainband tornadoes. Wea. Forecasting, 12, 479-501. Copyright 1997 by AMS.*"

- From the RPG Products menu, choose **Algorithms**, then select Adaptation Item: **Tornado Detection** from the drop-down menu.
- Unlock the padlock with the URC radio button and password.
- Change **Min 3D Feature Depth** from **1.5** to **2.0**.
- Change **Min 3D Feat Low-Lvl Delta Vel** from **25** to **14**.

- Change **Min TVS Delta Velocity** from 36 to 44.
- **Save**, confirm changes, and **Close** this menu.

7d. Precipitation Estimate Optimization

i. Z/R Relationship

Change the default (convective) Z/R relationship ($300R^{1.4}$) to the tropical Z/R relationship ($250R^{1.2}$) to provide better precipitation estimates. *This change should be coordinated with the River Forecast Centers (RFCs) that use data from your radar.* Switching to the tropical Z/R will increase the estimated precipitation accumulations, especially for higher reflectivities.

NOTE

Closely monitor rainfall accumulations relative to ground truth observations. If the Z/R relationship is changed too far in advance of the tropical cyclone rainbands, the radar will overestimate totals associated with pre-landfall convection. Refer to the text product, WSRSPDxxx (where xxx is the radar 3-letter identifier), to examine the bias table; pay particular attention to radar-gauge comparisons for periods up to 168 hours. Contact your River Forecast Center(s) for guidance.

- From the RPG Products menu, choose **Algorithms**, then select Adaptation Item: **Hydromet Rate** from the drop-down menu.
- Unlock the padlock with the URC radio button and password.
- Set **Z-R Multiplier Coef. [CZM]** to 250.
- Set **Z-R Exponent Coef. [CZP]** to 1.2.
- Continue to the next step.

ii. MXPRA (Maximum Precipitation Rate Threshold)

MXPRA should be increased to allow for greater rain rates. A MXPRA of 150 mm/hr (5.9 in/hr) should be sufficient during most tropical cyclone situations. [The ROC recommends that the MXPRA *never* be set higher than 200 mm/hr (7.9 in/hr).] If the MXPRA is not adjusted, the default value will only allow for a maximum rate of 103.8 mm/hr (4.1 in/hr). See the current Guidance on Adaptable Parameters (WSR-88D Handbook, Volume 1, RPG Refresh), section 7.6.1, for more information.

- From the RPG Products menu, choose **Algorithms**, then select Adaptation Item: **Hydromet Rate** from the drop-down menu.
- Unlock the padlock with the URC radio button and password.
- Set **Max Precipitation Rate [MXPRA]** to a value between 150 mm/hr (5.9 in/hr) and 200 mm/hr (7.9 in/hr).

- **Save**, confirm changes, and **Close** this menu and the **RPG Products** menu.

iii. Checking Precipitation Processing Adaptable Parameters

In order to confirm which Z/R relationship is being used, read the REFLECT-TO-PRECIP RATE CONVERSION MULTIPLICATIVE COEFFICIENT and REFLECT-TO-PRECIP RATE CONVERSION POWER COEFFICIENT in paired alphanumeric data with the One-Hour Precipitation (WSROHPxxx in an AWIPS text window, where xxx is the three-letter radar identifier). MAX PRECIPITATION RATE can be found near the bottom of the same list of parameters.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

8. Selectable Product Parameters

8a. Velocity Data Display Levels

Display of 16- and 256-data level Velocity products should be optimized for the current event according to URC policies and procedures.

NOTE

*If the “**Save Adaptation Data**” procedure was not followed, record values currently being used before making changes. These will be needed after the storm passes.*

i. 16-Level Products

Velocity data (display) levels for the 16-data level products can be set to display hurricane force winds. Note the default settings for the 16-data level Velocity products display a maximum of 64 kt, the minimum speed for a Category 1 hurricane. Begin with the suggested values, then adjust accordingly during the event to best display the maximum winds near the eye or center of the tropical cyclone.

Note that the threshold for a Category 2 hurricane is 83 knots, Category 3 is 96 knots, Category 4 is 114 knots, and (only seen with a 1.94 knot velocity increment) Category 5 is 135 knots. The Saffir-Simpson scale (summarized above) refers to winds measured 10 meters above the ground, not at the elevation of radar returns. Nevertheless, these speeds can draw your attention to locations with significant velocities. Other suggested 16-level Velocity values are 35, 65, 85, 100, 115, and 135 knots for Codes 10-15, respectively.

- Select **Products** in the HCI’s **RPG** icon.

- From the **RPG Products** menu, choose **Selectable Parameters**, then select **Category: Velocity Data Levels**.

- Unlock the Edit Selectable Product Parameters screen using the **URC** password.
- Select Velocity Table **Precip 16 / 0.97** (for the lower velocity increment).
- Change Code 15 to **100** or other desired number and then set the lower Code numbers to the desired speeds.
- Select Velocity Table **Precip 16 / 1.94** (for the higher velocity increment).
- Change Code 15 to **135** and then set the lower Code numbers to the desired speeds.
- **Save** the settings and confirm changes.
- **Close** the Velocity Data levels and Selectable Parameters windows.

ii. 256-Level Products

The velocity color scale displayed with 8-bit (256-data level) Velocity on AWIPS may be the same for both VMIs making it hard to tell which VMI is being used. View the scale on a 4-bit (16-level) or 3-bit (8-level) Velocity product to confirm which VMI is being used. Edit the 256-level Velocity color scale on AWIPS D2D for radial velocities that exceed 100 knots (inbound or outbound) to improve the visibility of selected velocities (such as 114 kt and, at the 1.94 kt increment, 135 kt).

NOTE

The display levels of Storm Relative Mean Radial Velocity products (SRM and SRR) will probably differ from those used for Base Velocity.

8b. Precipitation Product Display Levels

Adjust precipitation data display levels if the potential for extremely heavy rainfall exists. [Maximum displayable values are 12.7 inches for One Hour Precipitation (OHP) and Three Hour Precipitation (THP), and 25.4 inches for Storm Total Precipitation (STP) and User Selectable Precipitation (USP).]

- Select **Products** in the HCI's RPG icon.
- From the RPG Products menu, choose **Selectable Parameters**, then select Category: **OHP/THP Data Levels**.
- Unlock the Edit Selectable Product Parameters screen using the **URC** password.
- Change Codes 3 through 16 as desired for the current event.
- **Save** and confirm changes.
- Select Category: **STP Data Levels**.
- Change Codes 3 through 16 as desired for the current event.
- **Save**, confirm changes, and **Close**.

NOTE

The data levels for 256-data level storm total

precipitation (i.e., DSP) are set based on the maximum accumulation observed: the levels are every 0.01 inches up to 2.55 inches, every 0.02 inches from 2.56 to 5.10 inches, every 0.03 inches for 5.11 to 7.65 inches, every 0.04 inches for 7.66 to 10.20 inches, etc. Unlike the (4-bit) STP, OHP, and THP products, these levels are not user-adaptable.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

9. Archive Level II

Sites sending NWS, DoD, or FAA radar data to the NWS Level II Data Collection and Distribution Network need to ensure that the Local Data Manager (LDM) connection to the RPG is working properly. The status can be checked by going to <http://weather.noaa.gov/monitor/radar2/> to see how current (or latent) the Level II data are. NWS sites are responsible for sending data from DoD or FAA sites they control.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

B. AWIPS Preparation (At an AWIPS D-2D Workstation):

10. Data Archiving

Ensure that the Product Archiver is running for the tropical event. Left click on the graphics monitor background, select "Data Archiver," and then select "Data to Archive" or "Data to Store" and ensure appropriate products are listed.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

11. Data Requests from Adjacent Radars

Initiate "radar multiple requests" (RMRs) to adjacent radar sites. Continuously monitor adjacent sites, since significant tropical cyclone phenomena are based in the lower levels, and the radar closest to the center will sample the environment best.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

12. Communications Backup

In advance of major land-falling tropical systems, the Radar Operations Center, Regional Focal Points, and the CIO's office will partner to evaluate and initiate pre-emptive telecommunication (telecom) solutions and backup scenarios as appropriate. At a minimum, our major telecom Providers will be asked to place a heightened watch on the telecoms they provide to NWS and WSR-88D systems in the forecast path of any

major land-falling system. We learned from the 2005 hurricane season that our primary Providers routinely mobilize and stage telecom systems recovery equipment just outside of a storm's forecast track, but dialogs with the telephone companies will be systematically initiated in any event.

The WSR-88D Hotline will work with the respective Regions and WFOs to ensure adjacent WFOs have X.25 dial backup access to WSR-88Ds in the direct path of an approaching tropical system and that those backup connections are operational prior to landfall. In parallel, the WSR-88D Hotline will work with the respective Regions and WFOs to ensure a "spare" POTS (Plain Old Telephone Service) dial line (e.g., a spare office facsimile dial line) is extended to the RPG, made operational, and released to respective backup WFOs if and when service provided by one of the main NWS Providers is knocked out of operation.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)

13. Minimum RPS Lists

A set of suggested "minimum RPS Lists" was originally developed when RPS Lists were confined to only 20 products. However, the fundamental philosophy remains the same as operators interrogate tropical cyclones based on range from the radar and intensity.

NOTE

Ensure that your current WSR-88D RPS List on AWIPS includes the products on the lists shown below.

Storm Relative Mean Radial Velocity products (SRR, SRM) should be generated often via One-Time Requests (OTRs) or Radar Multiple Requests (RMRs) with individual or field motions **input frequently by the radar operator**. The algorithm that estimates storm motion may not be able to produce a useful motion on its own due to the rotational aspects of tropical cyclones.

If 8-bit (256-data level) velocity is on your RPS List, your AWIPS will generate an 8-bit SRM; change the motion parameters by selecting **Tools** and, when the window appears, select **Custom Storm Motion** and use the slider bars to adjust the values as necessary. If the SRM was being displayed prior to these changes, clear the display and reselect the product; the new motion will now be applied.

The following recommendations do not include products already on AWIPS National Datasets (prodList.txt).

Minimum recommended RPS List: **Center more than 124 nmi from radar**

<i>Product</i>	<i>AWIPS Mnem.</i>	<i>RPG Code#</i>	<i>Elevation Angle (degrees)</i>	<i>Data Levels</i>	<i>Data Resolution in km (nm)</i>
Base Reflectivity	Z	20	1.5	16	2 (1.1)
Base Velocity	V	99	0.5	256	0.25 (0.13)
	V	99	1.5	256	0.25 (0.13)
Digital Hybrid Scan Refl.	DHR	32		256	1 (0.54)

Minimum recommended RPS List: **Center 62-124 nmi from radar**

<i>Product</i>	<i>AWIPS Mnem.</i>	<i>RPG Code#</i>	<i>Elevation Angle (degrees)</i>	<i>Data Levels</i>	<i>Data Resolution in km (nm)</i>
Base Reflectivity	Z	19	6.0	16	1 (0.54)
	Z	94	0.5	256	1 (0.54)
	Z	94	1.5	256	1 (0.54)
Base Velocity	V	99	0.5	256	0.25 (0.13)
	V	99	1.5	256	0.25 (0.13)
Digital Hybrid Scan Refl.	DHR	32		256	1 (0.54)

Minimum recommended RPS List: **Center 32-62 nmi from radar**

<i>Product</i>	<i>AWIPS Mnem.</i>	<i>RPG Code#</i>	<i>Elevation Angle (degrees)</i>	<i>Data Levels</i>	<i>Data Resolution in km (nm)</i>
Base Reflectivity	Z	19	6.0	16	1 (0.54)
	Z	94	0.5	256	1 (0.54)
	Z	94	1.5	256	1 (0.54)
Base Velocity	V	26	0.5	16	0.5 (0.27)
	V	26	1.5	16	0.5 (0.27)
	V	99	0.5	256	0.25 (0.13)
	V	99	1.5	256	0.25 (0.13)
Digital Hybrid Scan Refl.	DHR	32		256	1 (0.54)

Minimum recommended RPS List: **Center 0-32 nmi from radar**

<i>Product</i>	<i>AWIPS Mnem.</i>	<i>RPG Code#</i>	<i>Elevation Angle (degrees)</i>	<i>Data Levels</i>	<i>Data Resolution in km (nm)</i>
Base Reflectivity	Z	19	6.0	16	1 (0.54)
	Z	19	9.9	16	1 (0.54)
Base Velocity	V	25	0.5	16	0.25 (0.13)
	V	26	0.5	16	0.5 (0.27)
	V	26	1.5	16	0.5 (0.27)
	V	99	0.5	256	0.25 (0.13)
	V	99	1.5	256	0.25 (0.13)
	V	99	2.4	256	0.25 (0.13)
	V	99	3.4	256	0.25 (0.13)
Digital Hybrid Scan Refl.	DHR	32		256	1 (0.54)

NOTE:

This document is a living document and will be updated as necessary (e.g., due to new research or software changes).

For the most recent version, see <http://www.ofcm.noaa.gov/nhop/wsr-88d/> and select the appropriate .pdf file (e.g., http://www.ofcm.noaa.gov/nhop/wsr-88d/nat_trop_cyc_wsr-88d_ops_plan_08_B9.pdf for the 2008 Build 9 version).

For a “**QUICK CHECK**” listing of items covered by the WSR-88D Tropical Cyclone Operations Plan (or for any other questions regarding the operation and performance of a WSR-88D radar system), contact the [WSR-88D Field Support Hotline](#) (800-643-3363 or 405-573-8900). The Hotline is normally staffed 24 hours a day 7 days per week by a maintenance specialist and from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CDT on regular workdays by a meteorologist. It *may* have a meteorologist on duty at additional times during major weather events, such as hurricanes. Someone from the Hotline may proactively contact field sites to ensure readiness for these events, especially with respect to communications. In addition, if necessary, the Hotline will contact Applications Branch specialists for problems with velocity, VCP selection, and precipitation estimation.

Acknowledgments: This document was originated by Scott Spratt and Dave Sharp (both at WFO Melbourne, FL) and Colin McAdie (National Hurricane Center, NHC). Reviews and updates have been made by Dan Berkowitz (ROC Applications Branch), Scott Spratt, and Colin McAdie. Suggested Minimum RPS Lists and use of the 8-data level velocity product were originally provided by Stacy Stewart (NHC). Use of the 256-data level velocity was suggested by Liz Quoetone (Warning Decision Training Branch, WDTB). TPV adaptable parameter threshold and MDA settings were suggested by Robert R. Lee (ROC Applications Branch).

Additional helpful suggestions were offered by Mike Istok (NWS Office of Science and Technology, Software Engineering Center), Tim Crum (NWS Radar Focal Point, ROC), Jeff Waldstreicher (Scientific Services Division, NWS Eastern Region Headquarters), Joe Chrisman (ROC Engineering Branch), Jami Boettcher and Paul Schlatter (Warning Decision Training Branch), Maj. Mike Miller (Chief, ROC Operations Branch), the ROC Radar Support Team (especially Dan Frashier, Tony Ray, Mark Albertelly, Stan Grell, and Nickie Flambures), Cindy Chrisman (ROC System Documentation Section), and ROC Applications Branch members Mark Fresch (now in the NWS Office of Hydrologic Development), Dave Zittel, Rich Murnan, and Randy Steadham.

[{Return to Contents ↑}](#)