



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
Fort Worth, Texas

January 2004

SOUTHERN TOPICS

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Working Together To Save Lives

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REGIONAL DIRECTOR

NEW MICs. I'm pleased to announce that **Larry Vannozi** is the new Meteorologist-in-Charge at WFO Nashville. Larry transfers from the MIC position at WFO Lubbock, a post he has held for several years. Prior to that assignment Larry provided leadership for the Southern Region warning coordination program at SRH. He takes over at Nashville behind Darrel Martin, who retired last week after a National Weather Service career of more than 40 years, the last 25 of which were spent as MIC of the Nashville office. Congratulations to both Larry and Darrel as they embark on their new responsibilities.

Congratulations as well to **Charles West**, new MIC at CWSU Atlanta. Charles, formerly a forecaster at the CWSU, recently was selected for the MIC position behind Warren Rodie, who has transferred to CWSU Denver.

IOC KUDOS. Last month all WFOs were provided with plaques in recognition of their exceptional efforts which led to the Southern Region achieving IFPS Initial Operating Capability. Along with the other regions, our ability to demonstrate this initial capability was an important first step to prove that we are indeed ready to enter a new era in terms of delivering digital products and other enhanced services from the WFOs to our customers. The IFPS dates back to a concept included in AWIPS requirements documents in the mid-1980s, so achieving IOC truly does represent a significant milestone. I want to congratulate staff members at all of the offices whose creativity, dedication, persistence, and just plain hard work got the job done.



As we move beyond these initial capabilities we can be proud that we will be providing our customers with products and services that are rich in content and quality, in both gridded and graphical form. Your continued efforts will help ensure they are accurate, timely, and best serve the customers' needs.

AMS AWARDS. NWS Southern Region employees were well represented at the 84th Annual Meeting of the American Meteorological Society in Seattle last week. Attached to this month's *Topics* is a summary of presentations authored or co-authored by SR participants. Others were involved as session chairmen or with AMS committee activities, and some helped host the NOAA booth. The following SR employees were recognized with awards at the meeting:

Gary Grice, recently retired Southern Region Deputy Director, received the **Charles I. Mitchell Award** in recognition of his long-term service in weather forecasting activities.

John Feldt, Hydrologist-in-Charge of the Southeast River Forecast Center in Atlanta, received the **F. W. Reichelderfer Award** for distinguished environmental services to the nation.

Dan Smith, Chief of the SRH Scientific Services Division, was named an **AMS Fellow** in recognition of his outstanding contributions to atmospheric sciences and their applications over a substantial period of years.

I am also pleased to note that NBC Telemundo chief meteorologist John Toohey-Morales received this year's AMS Award for Outstanding Service by a Broadcast Meteorologist. John is a former NWS and Southern Region forecaster and has been very successful in helping us communicate our products to the Hispanic community nation-wide.

IFPS

IFPS CUSTOMER WEB PAGE. Want to know what our customers are saying about IFPS? Comments directly from them are added to the SRH IFPS customer Web page when received, including for example comments about forecasts from the grids, IFPS graphical images on the Web, and the different IFPS products we provide. The IFPS customer Web page is at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/srh/cwwd/msd/customer.html>. They are all very positive comments, and some similar suggestions are being received about defining weather types on our graphical images that you may want to improve for your customers.

DIRECTIVE 10-506 HAS BEEN SIGNED. The Digital Data Directive became effective January 2. Thank you for your comments and feedback; input from the field offices was incorporated in the final version of the directive.

SERP TOOL. The Serp tool is being used at WFO Tulsa to produce a NOW-type experimental forecast which is on their Web site. The graphic shows a great analysis for their customers. Check it out here: <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tulsa/now.htm>

MANY NEW FORECASTS. John Lewis at WFO Little Rock has created a Web page describing all of the new forecasts available on their Web site. Included are details and links to pinpoint forecasts, tabular products and graphical images. Check this out at: <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/lzk/html/newfcst3.htm>

CLIMATE, WATER AND WEATHER DIVISION

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES BRANCH

GIS WORKSHOP HOSTED BY SRH. On December 10, National Weather Service Southern Region hosted a GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Workshop with 11 state and federal agencies. The workshop was organized by Southern Region to develop a structure of providing vital weather information in GIS-based format. GIS-based weather information will:

- Aid emergency managers during hazardous weather situations, homeland security incidents, and operational planning,
- Provide support to government agencies during their critical operations, and
- Further research efforts in meteorology and related sciences.

The participating parties were able to exchange resource information and design a plan that will benefit all participants. Further meetings are scheduled between the panel members in March to continue this initiative.

MARINE

2003 HAZMAT Review. Since April 2003, SR WFO forecasters in ten separate offices have helped NOAA HAZMAT with spot forecasts for environmental and life-threatening marine/river spills or accidents in 29 separate incidents. WFOs Mobile and New Orleans had five separate collaborative efforts providing public, marine and spot forecasts to NOAA HAZMAT personnel on site. WFO San Juan forecasters gave forecasts for a two-week period when a vessel was grounded, WFO New Orleans gave forecasts for ten days when an underwater pipeline broke, and WFO Houston gave spot forecasts for eight days when a barge containing 235,000 gallons of 98% sulfuric acid flipped over in the industrial canal in Texas City, Texas. Many thanks for the support to NOAA HAZMAT, and the Coast Guard for all the informative and detailed forecasts which saved lives, protected property and provided economic relief.

Marine Updates Now Online. Southern Region marine program manager Melinda Bailey is providing quarterly updates about the Marine Program in .pdf format. You can view these updates online at: <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/srh/cwwd/msd/publicmarine/marine.htm>

PUBLIC

Public Updates Now Online. Southern Region public program manager Melinda Bailey is providing quarterly updates about the Public Program. These updates (in .pdf format) are a good communication tool instead of receiving numerous informational emails. You can view these updates online at: <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/srh/cwwd/msd/publicmarine/public.htm>

Update to Modernized PILS Transition. The Communication Identifier End State Transition (CID Transition), i.e., the "Transition to Modernized PILs," plan has been pushed back yet again. Transition of the first set of products will occur this spring. The process will take about 18 months to complete. We want to thank everyone for their patience during the spin up of this project. As soon as actions come to SRH from NWS Headquarters (reviewing PNSs, files, or databases), we will let you know; nothing will be sent out to our customers without your office knowing about it first. After reviews, the first PNS will be issued in the next couple of months. If you have any questions, please contact Melinda Bailey or Eric Howieson.
http://www.nws.noaa.gov/datamgmt/NWS_CID_Transition_Plan.html

WEATHER FACT OF THE DAY AT WFO BIRMINGHAM. SCEP student Kristin Hurley has created a database of daily weather facts. These weather facts come from events dating back as early as 1830 in the County Warning Area of WFO Birmingham. Interesting events include flooding, tornadoes, hail, record temperatures, and even earthquakes. There is a weather fact for all 365 days of the year. With the help of ITO Greg Machala these interesting weather facts automatically appear each day on the WFO Birmingham homepage.
(<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/bmx>)

WFO MIAMI WCM PARTICIPATES IN THE NWSH CSD/CPC PARTNERSHIP EXPERIENCE. WFO Miami WCM Jim Lushine spent two weeks in the Washington, D.C. area in mid-December, participating in the Climate Service Division Partnership Program. This program allows field personnel the opportunity to spend one week at NWSH participating in activities at the Climate Service Division (CSD), and an additional week at the Climate Prediction Center (CPC), in Camp Spring, Maryland. Jim also presented his initial hypothesis to the group correlating the possible relationship between southeast Florida hurricanes and rainfall in May. Jim's summary of the two weeks was, "I gained an enormous amount of insight into the programs and products of both CSD and CPC and their relationship to the regional and local levels." Information on the Climate Partnership Program at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/csd/visitors>

ISSUANCE OF RECORD REPORTS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENTS. Many SR WFOs have done outstanding work in the area of partnering with NCDC or the appropriate Regional Climate Center to make their local climate databases more robust. The benefit of this is the ability to issue pertinent Record Report products and Public Information Statements when warranted. This is a great vehicle for expanding the visibility of not only the local NWS WFO, but also of the local WFOs climate program. Two great examples of this by WFO Tulsa are displayed on their Web site. One is a summary of the 2003 weather for the Tulsa and Ft. Smith areas (http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tulsa/2003_year_in_review.html). The second is a Record Report for many observing sites within their County Warning Area (http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tulsa/jan022004_record_highs.html)

SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS & OUTREACH

Disaster Preparedness Party in Tampa. WFO Tampa WCM Daniel Noah staffed the NWS display at a disaster preparedness party and provided a short presentation on the types of hazardous weather families can expect on Florida's Gulf Coast. The display advertised the advantages of NOAA Weather Radio while publication handouts included the Florida Hazardous Weather Awareness Guide produced in partnership with the state. Other participants at the party included the Tampa emergency manager, public works, police, fire, code enforcement, and the American Red Cross. The party was sponsored by the Heart of East Tampa Revitalization Council whose goal is to revitalize the neighborhood with full community involvement.

Winter Weather Awareness Week in Alabama. WFO Huntsville WCM Tim Troutman joined with north Alabama media, several emergency management officials, school administrators, and Alabama state emergency management at WFO Huntsville to kick off winter weather awareness week on December 1. At a news conference, Tim completed an in-depth winter weather awareness presentation and answered questions about Alabama winter weather climatology, winter weather watch and warning criteria, then addressed communications procedures between the NWS, EMAs and media across north Alabama.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATION

STORMREADY

Ten new StormReady recognitions were reported in Southern Region last month. WFO Huntsville recognized Franklin County, Tennessee as StormReady while WFO Tallahassee recognized Washington County, Florida.

In a tremendous StormReady effort, WFO Norman recognized the counties of Kay, Garfield and Comanche, Oklahoma; and separately, the communities of Newkirk, Jones, Enid and Norman, Oklahoma. Also, WFO Norman recognized Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas as one of just a handful of recognized StormReady universities nationwide.

Southern Region has 12 StormReady communities thus far in FY04.

SKYWARN Training Campaign. WFO Nashville WCM Jerry Orchanian provided SKYWARN Spotter training for 212 police and firefighters in a series of 12 basic SKYWARN spotter classes, at the city hall in Franklin, Tennessee, over a six day period. The SKYWARN spotter course served as a local pre-requisite for trained police and firefighters to activate the tornado sirens in Franklin.

MEDIA/PUBLIC EXTERNAL SUPPORT

NWS Southern Region Has a Strong Presence at Emergency Communications Workshop. The Florida Association of Broadcasters sponsored an Emergency Communications Workshop in Tampa last month and the NWS was there in full stride. NWS participants included SRH NWS program manager Mike Mach and WCMs Dennis Decker, Al Sandrik and Daniel Noah from WFOs Melbourne, Jacksonville and Tampa Bay Area, respectively. The workshop was run by a federal advisory committee called the Media Security and Reliability Council (<http://www.media.security.org>). One of the goals of the workshop was to discuss best practices in the areas of public communication and safety, including the Emergency Alert System and NOAA Weather Radio.

South Florida Winter Season Outlook. WFO Miami MIC Rusty Pfof participated with the University of Florida's Miami-Dade County Cooperative Extension Service in a cold protection workshop at the extension office in Homestead, Florida. Rusty provided two presentations to approximately 25 attendees on South Florida freeze meteorology and history, and another on the winter outlook for South Florida. Rusty's presentation afforded an excellent opportunity to also showcase the WFO Miami Web site with demonstrations of the newest grids and clickable maps, along with highlighting Miami's new winter weather products; Freeze Outlook, Freeze Watch, and Freeze Warning.

"Storm Stories" Interview for The Weather Channel. WFO Nashville WCM Jerry Orchanian was interviewed by Tower Productions about the tornado that devastated parts of downtown Nashville on April 16, 1998. Jerry helped reconstruct the event for the productions team with an excellent presentation composed of NWS Storm Data and WSR-88D radar imagery. He also provided the productions team additional information about the "Forgotten F5 Tornado" which occurred on the same day in Lawrence County, Tennessee. The show is scheduled to air on The Weather Channel next March.

WFO TAMPA BAY SUPPORTS INTER-AGENCY FIRE COURSE. WFO Tampa Bay fire weather program manager Rick Davis taught weather sections for the Inter-Agency Basic Prescribed Fire Course earlier this month at Oscar Scherer State Park near Venice, Florida. During the presentation and hands-on exercises the 35 students learned that weather is the most variable component of prescribed and wildland fires.

Topics discussed included Florida's climate, air masses and fronts, wind, temperature, relative humidity, atmospheric stability, thunderstorms, and other local phenomena, NWS products and services, taking proper weather observations, and most importantly safety. Representatives from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Florida Division of Forestry, Florida Park Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and private land managers attended the course.

CROSSWIND PROJECT BEGINS AT CWSU FORT WORTH. The Fort Worth CWSU has developed an experimental Crosswind Web application. Designed as a decision aid for use by ATC personnel or meteorologists, the new product can be found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/zfw/crosswind.htm>. To view and use this product Java VM will need to be resident on your PC. Currently the product contains 41 major airports across the U.S., generally characterized as pacing airports in the National Airspace System. Additionally, a stand alone version of this product is available from the Fort Worth CWSU and will be mounted on the Web page for download. The difference in the download version is that it enables a user to automatically update the display without user interaction, accessing new MTR data once every 10 seconds.

Team members from Fort Worth CWSU are solely responsible for the development and implementation of the Crosswind Web application. Traffic management personnel aided in technical air traffic aspects to develop the Crosswind application.

FIRE WEATHER CUSTOMER MEETING IN ALBUQUERQUE. Last month WFO Albuquerque hosted a customer meeting for the fire weather community. Representatives from USFS, BLM, NPS, BIA, USDA and state forestry participated in an open meeting that covered numerous issues. IMET Brent Wachter presented various statistics and trends in fire weather and unveiled a new fire weather zones map being considered for implementation late in 2004 or at the beginning of the 2005 fire season. Customers discussed the map in detail and are in favor of the changes. The map will be available for customer review and comment over the next few months. Meanwhile, customers also indicated requests for spot forecasts will continue to grow rapidly in the years ahead. As of December 16, WFO Albuquerque had already issued over 750 spot forecasts in 2003, and will likely hit 800 by year's end.

WFO SAN ANTONIO REACHES OUT TO FIRE WEATHER PARTNER AND THANKS COOP OBSERVER. WFO San Antonio fire weather program manager Monte Oaks ventured out with Joe Baskin and Dale Lininger to save government resources while visiting the La Grange, Texas Forest Service (TFS) Office and co-located RAWS observation site. Sarah Brooks led a tour and illustrated how the La Grange TFS office utilizes the RAWS data. Meanwhile Joe presented a service achievement award to the La Grange cooperative observer, and Dale made some adjustments to restore the operation of the nearby Ledbetter profiler.

HYDROLOGIC SERVICES BRANCH

WFO SAN ANGELO FLASH FLOOD WORKSHOP. Service hydrologist Jason Johnson, WCM Hector Guerrero and MIC Buddy McIntyre conducted a flash flood workshop for emergency managers in their CWA. The workshop focused on flash flooding in urban areas, the different products issued by the NWS for these events, and working toward determining flash flood guidance values for urban areas within the CWA. The emergency managers suggested and expressed an interest for an “Urban Flash Flood Warning” product to differentiate from a “Flash Flood Warning” and “Urban and Small Stream Flood Advisory.” Working within the boundaries of the current products, the group reached an agreement that more detailed information in products to clarify impacts and threats would help all users in their response to events. Finally, ITO Curt Kockx provided a demonstration of the Emergency Management Display System (EMDS) that will be available for each of the emergency managers. The WFO staff will be working to finalize an EMDS installation package and onsite training plan for each interested emergency manager.

INTERAGENCY WATER RESOURCE MEETING. In collaboration with the Corps of Engineer Southwest Division (COE SWD), the Central Region of the United States Geological Survey, and the Bureau of Reclamation, we conducted the first ever water resource interagency meeting covering the COE SWD service area. The meeting was hosted by the COE SWD in Dallas. This water resource interagency meeting mirrored one conducted annually covering the COE Mississippi Valley Division service area. Over 40 people attended including representatives from local, regional, and national offices of the four agencies. Southern Region representation included CWWD, four RFCs, and the hydrology program managers from Fort Worth, Little Rock, San Angelo, and Austin/San Antonio. Presentations were made on each agency’s mission, operations, priorities, and budget, products and services, and new science and technology. In addition NWS presentations included an overview of the AHPS program and the new AHPS Web page. The goal of this first meeting and subsequent meetings is to share information and identify opportunities for interagency collaborations on various hydrometeorological subject matters such as hydrometeorological data and forecast information exchange and science and technology. This water resource interagency meeting will be held annually and hosted by another agency on a rotating basis.

RFC TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER WORKSHOP. We conducted our third annual RFC Technology Transfer Workshop at the West Gulf RFC. Representatives from the four SR RFCs, WFO Fort Worth, and our Climate, Water and Weather Division participated in the workshop. The national RFC development manager participated via conference call. This annual workshop provides each of our RFCs an opportunity to share information about hydrologic operational procedures and new science and technology applications which can lead to collaborative team activities. These team activities ultimately lead to operational procedures/products/services that are consistent for all the RFCs in our region.

Based on the team charter mission/goals, some of these teams may include representation from the other NWS regions and NWSH based on coordination with the national RFC development manager. The products/services from these teams are shared with the Office of Hydrologic Development, OCWWS HSD, and the other regional HSDs. The LINUX PC-based RFC backup system developed by our RFC backup team, and led by Arkansas-Red Basin RFC, and the regional precipitation analysis information graphics developed by the RFC Web presence and led by Dave Reed, are recent examples of projects that were shared with others in our organization.

As a result of this year's meeting, new teams will be formed and an RFC meeting will be held. This includes a team to address the requirements for the initial development/deployment of a hydrologic event simulator called "Simulating Hydrologic Activities During Real Time (SHARE)," (similar to the Weather Event Simulator - Displaced Real Time (WES-DRT) for meteorological simulations), an RFC/WFO team to address implementation strategies for the new version of the WFO site-specific hydrologic model, a team to develop AHPS brochures, and an RFC flash flood guidance meeting to address flash flood guidance discontinuities along the RFC service area boundaries. The SHARE concept and development has been led by the Lower Mississippi RFC. The efforts of the SHARE team will ultimately lead to a training tool that could be used by hydrologic forecasters/HAS forecasters at the RFCs to conduct case study reviews and various types of hydrologic event simulations. The data archive for these simulations will be made available from the new RFC archive database. The porting of RFC software applications to support the mobile SR RFC backup system is assisting the SHARE team in porting the same applications on the RFC WES-DRT computer. This development effort, and future communications and coordination with OHD, OCWWS HSD, and WTDB, may ultimately lead to integrating AWIPS WFO hydrologic applications to the WFO WES-DRT computer.

COLLABORATIVE DISTRIBUTED MODEL PROJECT. SR HSB is working with WFOs Houston, Austin/San Antonio, San Juan, and the West Gulf and Southeast RFCs on a collaborative distributed hydrologic model project with Vieux and Associates located at the University of Oklahoma. As part of this collaboration, Vieux and Associates will set up, calibrate, and execute in real time their continuous distributed hydrologic model at no charge to the NWS so we can ultimately compare the model output to various NWS hydrologic models in real time (e.g., WFO site specific hydrologic models, NWS-developed distributed hydrologic models). This will be a multi-year project. We will keep you posted on this collaborative project.

OPERATIONAL PRECIPITATION ANALYSIS INFORMATION GRAPHICS. The experimental regional precipitation analysis information graphics developed by our regional RFC Web presence team are now official NWS information graphics. These graphics and information about these graphics are available at:

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/rfeshare/precip_analysis.php?location=SR

We encourage all offices to make their customer base aware of this Web page, the Web page survey, and the information contained on it. It provides very useful precipitation analysis information for a vast array of customers and applications. Congratulations to all of the members of the RFC Web presence team for a job well done!

ALPHA TESTING. WFO Tulsa, in collaboration with ABRFC and the office of Hydrologic Development, will take part in an alpha test of new WSR-88D PPS algorithms. One is called the range correction algorithm (RCA) and the other is called the convection stratiform separation algorithm (CSSA). The RCA uses data close to the radar to create a mean vertical profile of reflectivity for current conditions. The RCA uses the VPR to generate adjustment factors for longer range reflectivity values. The RCA is used only for stratiform rainfall situations. The CSSA will be used to determine the percentage likelihood that convective characteristics exist at any given point. These Open RPG techniques have the potential to significantly improve the absolute accuracy of the WSR-88D precipitation estimates. WFO Tulsa was chosen in our region due to the dense automated surface-based observational networks available to provide ground truth precipitation for the WSR-88D precipitation processing subsystem. Phase 1 of this test will begin in the spring of 2004 and end in the early summer of 2004. Phase 1 will include a Web-based evaluation of images generated by the new WSR-88D PPS software. These images will include hourly DPA products with and without the RCA adjustments, a graphical representation of the adjustment curves, adjustment factor curves, and the VPR. These algorithms will be included in ORPG Build 8.0. The output from these algorithms will be accessible to forecasters via an MPE graphical user interface in AWIPS Operational Build 6.

We are also working with the Office of Hydrologic Development to identify an RFC/WFO to perform an alpha test/evaluation for the new SACSMA version of the WFO site-specific hydrologic model. This version of the model will be available in AWIPS Build OB4.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

FORECASTING - AND COMMUNICATING - PROBABILITIES. Often enough we hear “the public doesn’t understand probability, so why bother with PoP forecasts anyway?” That’s a debatable point, but it’s hard to imagine most people who ask “What’s the chance I’m going to get rained on?” wouldn’t think that the chance is greater when they hear a higher PoP value. And that’s really all they need to understand about our precipitation probability forecasts. A knowledge of statistical theory really isn’t needed. Many studies have shown it’s not the basic idea of probability that causes problems for our customers, but instead it’s knowing *what* we’re forecasting the probability *of*. That’s why over the years WSOM chapters, OMLs, ROMLs and now directives have gone to lengths to clarify how and when various terms should be used in our forecasts. We’re noticing the formatters that are being implemented with our gridded products aren’t necessarily as careful as past policies, so some more work may be needed in that area.

We also frequently hear that *more* probabilistic forecasts, aided by ensemble models and new types of guidance products, are the wave of the future - the key to more useful services. If that’s to be the case, then all the more reason to explore how best to adapt our 40-year old PoP forecast program to today’s IFPS/NDFD gridded operations. The most obvious change we have to deal with is from area (zone or county) to point forecasts. We also have the opportunity now to provide PoPs for shorter time periods - for 6-hr, 3-hr, and perhaps even 1-hr periods. That presents a real challenge. We encourage all forecasters to review the best training material we’re aware of on PoP forecasting: Larry Hughes’ 1980 technical memorandum, *Probability Forecasting - Reasons, Procedures, Problems*. If a copy is not available at the office, please contact SSD and we will provide one.

There are many ways to communicate probabilities. We've included a tech attachment this month to show how the use of odds can help communicate risk information, in this case for critical temperature thresholds.

MOS GUIDANCE FOR COOPERATIVE SITES. The NWSH Meteorological Development Lab has completed a major project to provide GFS-based max/min temperature guidance for roughly 4700 cooperative observer locations. In addition, GFS- and Eta-based MOS guidance has been developed for snowfall amount for roughly 6500 co-op observing sites. Guidance for Days 1-4 is available at 0000, 0600, 1200 and 1800 UTC, and for Days 1-7 at 0000 UTC only. Initially, alphanumeric text messages containing the max/min temperatures are posted on the MDL Web site at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/mdl/synop/products.shtml>. More information about the Coop MOS is at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/mdl/synop/coop.htm>. Graphical depictions of the new guidance products should be posted on the MDL Web site this month. This is part of MDL's overall efforts to provide forecasters with guidance at a resolution necessary to initialize the digital database, and work is underway to provide the guidance in a format most useful for that. Meanwhile, comments are invited about the new guidance products. Please address those to Paul Dallavalle at Paul.Dallavalle@noaa.gov.

IST/VISIT TELETRAINING FEBRUARY SCHEDULE. The Virtual Institute for Satellite Integration Training (VISIT) and the Integrated Sensor Training (IST) Professional Development Series (PDS) sessions for February are listed below. Offices can register for the teletraining sessions by sending email to: visit@comet.ucar.edu. To access the teletraining calendar, go to: <http://www.cira.colostate.edu/ramm/visit/ecal.asp>

The teletraining planning calendar with sessions offered by COMET Distance Learning Aviation Course, Interactive Forecast Preparation System (IFPS) PDS and Warning Decision Training Branch (WDTB) is at: <http://www.cira.colostate.edu/ramm/visit/planning.html>

The sessions currently scheduled for February are:

- Water Vapor Channel Satellite Imagery (Basic, February 6,11,17,26)
- Cyclogenesis: Analysis utilizing Geostationary Satellite Imagery (Basic, February 10)
- Lightning Meteorology I (Basic, February 18)
- Lightning Meteorology II (Advanced, February 19)
- Mesoscale Analysis of Convective Weather Using GOES RSO Imagery (Basic, February 17)
- Use of GOES/Rapid Scan Observation imagery with other Remote Sensor Data for Diagnosing Severe Weather across CONUS (RSO 3)
 - Part 1 (Intermediate, February 24)
 - Part 2 (February 25)

Sessions can be reviewed in advance by following the instructions in the student guides available on the ISTPDS/VISIT page: <http://www.cira.colostate.edu/ramm/visit/visithome.asp>

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

SYSTEMS INTEGRATION BRANCH

National ESA Conference. We want to thank the NWSH Office of Departmental Systems (OPS) for their efforts in putting together the first National ESA Conference. We have heard nothing but very positive feedback from those who attended. John McNulty, Mark Paese, Al Wissman and their team are commended for putting together such a successful event. We are very proud of all the ESAs from Southern Region WFOs who stepped up to the plate and made presentations at this conference. They include Carl Hill (Lubbock), Brian Burgess (Huntsville), Kathy Andolina (Jacksonville), Mike Waddell (Shreveport), Steve Clark (Nashville) and Steve Baker (Forth Worth).

IT. Thanks to the hard work of our local and regional staff we were able to complete the IT certification and accreditation process on time. This was no small undertaking, as we completed a six to eight month process in less than two months. It has been a learning experience for everyone involved from the CIO's office to the local WFOs.

AWIPS OB2 Status. Recent security audits of AWIPS prompted the need for an additional maintenance release early in the month. MR OB2.3 contains several security patches for both Linux and HP systems. This MR was mandated to be installed by the end of December putting all sites at OB2.3 for the start of the new year.

OB3 beta 0 was successfully installed at SRH last month. WFO Mobile was the first operational beta site and WFO Shreveport will follow on January 14. Currently, two maintenance releases are planned for OB3. The first, OB3.1, should arrive around April and include additional fixes for WWA as well as a possible move of the Notification Server from the AS to the DS.

AvnFPS 2.0 is a prerequisite for OB3 and is slated for national deployment January 24. Completion of implementation is scheduled for February 26.

Linux Workstation Status. Through the end of December, 24 sites had installed the new Linux workstations. Installs continue to go smoothly. Please complete, sign and return the SF-120 that was sent to your office for the disposal of the old HP hardware. The sooner the paperwork is returned, the sooner we can get the equipment removed from your office.

DVB-S Operational Acceptance Test (OAT). The Digital Video Broadcast Satellite (DVB-S) OAT will be conducted from January 5 through the 30th. This is the next step in the SBN upgrade and includes WFOs Norman, Slidell, Huntsville and Key West, and Lower Mississippi RFC.

If successful, national deployment will be conducted in March 2004.

WSR-88D ORPG Build 5 Status. WFOs Fort Worth, Tulsa and Norman will be participating in the beta test for ORPG Build 5. The beta test will start in February and early March with national deployment scheduled to begin in late March.

Level II Project Status. Phase 1 includes implementing the Initial Operating Capability (IOC). The hardware and Internet2 circuits required to implement the IOC are now in place for the NWS Central and Western regions. All CR WSR-88D sites have joined the “CRAFT” network and WR sites are joining the network every day. The server hardware will be installed at Eastern Region by the end of the month. The connectivity to the Southern Region will be established in early January. The list of 96 sites sending data electronically to the CRAFT server, National Climatic Data Center, and available for distribution is at: http://www.osf.noaa.gov/NWS_Level_2/Site_Listing.asp

The site will be updated at least weekly until the last of the 124 sites are on the network.

OBSERVATIONS AND FACILITIES BRANCH

Paid Snow Network Observations. SRH Observations and Facilities Branch in conjunction with the Climate Services Branch has been working diligently on establishing paid observers to collect snow fall and snow depth observations. Since receiving Jack Hayes’ December 12 e-mail authorizing the regions to begin the process for securing paid snow observers, SR has been actively involved with OS7 and the other regions to standardize the requirements and procedures in addition to prioritizing all LCD sites in the region. Southern Region divided all 60 LCD sites into three categories:

- 1) Sites that receive more than 1” of snow per year.
- 2) Sites that receive between 0.1” and 1” per year.
- 3) Sites that receive less than 0.1” per year.

Initial efforts will be focused on establishing paid snow observers at the 32 Category 1 sites and 13 Category 2 sites. The WFOs are already performing snow observations at 13 collocated WFO/LCD sites. Potential observers have been identified at another 21 sites, leaving only 11 sites for new observer recruitment.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

DIVERSITY/EEO AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

SOUTHERN REGION WORKFORCE TRANSACTIONS <u>DECEMBER 1 - 31, 2003</u>			
<u>Southern Region Losses</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>From (Office)</u>	<u>Action/Transfer</u>	<u>From Title/Grade</u>
Eloy Colon	WFO SJU	Retirement	Service Hydrologist, GS-12
Warren Rodie	CWSU ZTL	Transfer to CR	MIC, GS-13
Jeffrey Stonesifer	WFO ABX	Resign	Forecaster, GS-12

<u>Southern Region Gains</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>To (Office)</u>	<u>Action/Transfer</u>	<u>To Title/Grade</u>
Joel Veeneman	WFO CRP	Transfer from ER	ITO, GS-13
Douglas Vogelsang	WFO MEG	Transfer from WR	HMT, GS-11
Paul Rossmann	CWSU JAX	New Hire	Forecaster, GS-12
Richard Martinez	WFO BRO	New Hire	El Tech, GS-10
Jessica Stroupe	WFO BMX	New Hire	Forecaster, GS-9

<u>Within Region Transfers/Actions</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>To (Office)</u>	<u>Action/Transfer</u>	<u>To Title/Grade</u>
Jason Wright	WFO BMX	Promotion	WCM, GS-14
Charles West	CWSU ZTL	Promotion	MIC, GS-13