

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION DOCUMENT

Experimental Marine Weather Warning (MWW)

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National Weather Service
Experimental Marine Weather Warning
Product Description Document (PDD)

Part I – Mission Connection

a. Product Description – The Marine Weather Warning (MWW) product is a text bulletin intended to better inform mariners of adverse non-precipitation conditions. It will also provide consistency of the National Weather Service (NWS) Coastal Weather Forecasts (CWFs), Great Lakes Open Lakes Forecasts (GLFs) and Great Lakes near shore forecasts (NSHs) with other NWS programs (winter weather, hydrologic, non-precipitation and coastal hazards).

The MWW will be disseminated by the National Weather Service (NWS) to mariners, emergency managers, the media, the commercial weather enterprise, and the general public consistent with other marine and public watch/warning/advisory products. Technological advances may allow many customers to be alerted to marine hazards more quickly by providing access to the MWW through cell phones, PDAs, or satellite communications, earlier than the traditional marine forecast process.

The MWW will be used to issue watches, warnings, and advisories for the following marine or Great Lake conditions:

- Hurricane Force Wind
- Storm
- Gale
- Hazardous Seas
- Small Craft Advisory
- Low Water Advisory
- Freezing Spray
- Low visibility (fog, volcanic ash, smoke)

The MWW allows the forecaster to state the marine hazard (Small Craft Advisory, Gale, etc.) and elaborate on the synoptic cause of the hazard (STRONG LOW PRESSURE OVER THE GULF OF ALASKA WILL MOVE INTO THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL WATERS BY THURSDAY).

b. Purpose- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) NWS is the official United States governmental agency issuing warnings during life-threatening weather situations. The mission includes forecasts and warnings for the US, adjacent coastal waters and ocean areas for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. The provision of the MWW is consistent with the NWS mission where it states NWS data and products form a national information

database and infrastructure, which can be used by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public, and the global community.

c. Audience - The target audience for the MWW includes recreational boaters, commercial fishermen, merchant vessels, ferry operators, the cruise industry, emergency managers, coastal communities, the oil industry (oil rigs and services), the Dept. of Defense (Navy, Marine Corps), and the Dept. of Homeland Security (USCG).

d. Presentation Format - The MWW will be a new marine warning product with Valid Time Event Code (VTEC) headings transmitted via AWIPS and the SBN, and therefore be more easily parsed by computer systems for dissemination separate from the body of marine forecasts.

e. Feedback Method – We are always seeking to improve our products based on user feedback. Experimental feedback will be provided from the user community through Public Information Statements, experimental trials at the following NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs):

DTX – Detroit/Pontiac, CR

BUF – Buffalo, ER

CAR – Caribou, ER

HFO – Honolulu, PR

TAE – Tampa Bay, SR

MFR – Medford, WR

MOB- Mobile, SR

Users are encouraged to provide feedback on the experimental products during the experimental feedback period from July 24, 2007 to July 31, 2008, by using the brief survey and comment form provided online at: <http://www.weather.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=mww>

Favorable feedback has already been received from:

Private sector weather vendors from the National Partners meeting at NWS headquarters (June 2006), The Great Lakes Carriers Association (February 2007), The International Ship Masters Assoc. (February 2007), and the US Coast Guard Ninth District (February 2007), and the National Weather Service Employees Organization (NWSEO).

Comments may also be mailed to:

NOAA National Weather Service

W/OS21

Mr. Mark Tew

1325 East West Highway

Silver Spring, MD 20910

E mail: mark.tew@noaa.gov

Part II - Technical Description

a. Format and Science Basis – The MWW will be provided via the AWIPS base line in text format with VTEC, UGC, and WMO headings. Dr. Greg Mann, SOO at the Detroit WFO, is preparing the formatter. The MWW is expected to be tried on an experimental basis in the Summer of 2007, and if found acceptable, it will then be entered into the AWIPS baseline for OB8.3 by Raytheon-Keene, the contractor.

The MWW:

- Standardizes procedures for forecasters
- Provides a needed warning tool
- Provides a marine version of the “watch” product
- Is a vehicle to carry VTEC from the CWF and NSH
- Fills a VTEC hole in the GLF

Provides value to users and partners by:

- Allowing for more detailed warning information
- Making the marine hazard information more readily accessible, usable, understandable and consistent nationally.
- Being easier to obtain using automated means

b. Product Availability – The MWW will be issued when conditions warrant, during the routine marine forecast cycle every 6 or 12 hours (varies by region) and when amendments are needed for unscheduled forecast changes.

c. Additional Information.

1. The MWW was initially suggested by the WFO Eureka and the Western Region, presented during the June 2006 annual Marine Program Managers Meeting.
2. The MWW is a forecaster created and edited product.
3. The formatter used to create the MWW is created by Greg Mann of WFO DTW. It will have UGC, VTEC, WMO, and other applicable headings.
4. Additional training is not believed to be necessary, as the MWW will be processing forecast and warning information which NWS forecasters are already issuing.
5. A new Instruction, NWSI 10-315 will be created for the MWW.
6. The MWW has reached gate 2 in the OSIP process.
7. The National Weather Service Employees Organization has a representative on the MWW Integrated Work Team for pre-decisional consultation and planning.

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