NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

National Centers for Environmental Prediction

Aviation Weather Center (Kansas City, MO)

Director: Bob Maxson

Scope of Responsibility

The Aviation Weather Center (AWC) located in Kansas City, Missouri, issues warnings, forecasts, and analyses of hazardous weather for aviation. Staffed by 76 personnel, the center develops warnings of hazardous weather for aircraft in flight and forecasts of weather conditions for the next two to four days that will impact both domestic and international aviation. The Center leads the collaborative effort to develop a forecast of expected convective events for the entire country every 2 hours used by FAA to manage aviation traffic flows across the country. The AWC also maintains a six-person unit assigned to the FAA National Command Center located in Warrenton, VA that provides impact-based decision support services (IDSS) directly to FAA National Operations Managers (NOMs). Additionally, the AWC is one of two global World Area Forecast Centers designated by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and hosts the NWS Aviation Weather Testbed (AWT) which acts as a catalyst to accelerate aviation weather research into sustained and supportable operations.

Key FY17 Milestones

1. Operationally implement the Graphical Forecasts for Aviation per FAA requirements and sunset the forecaster-produced textual Area Forecast.
2. Implement the Traffic Flow Management Collaborative Forecast (TCF) per FAA requirements.
3. Develop Science and Technology advancements, including GFE SmartTools for National Grid Manipulation, to enable a nationally consistent Common Operating Picture (COP) of Cloud and Visibility grids.
4. Capability to support FAA Traffic Flow Management Requirements including operational implementation of the impacts-based Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (TAF) board, the Terminal Radar Control Facility (TRACON) gate forecasts, and TFM web portal.
5. Extend experimental graphical forecast alternatives to text Area Forecasts for the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean and Hawaii.
6. Complete AWC-specific Use Cases for the transition of NAWIPS to AWIPS II.

Major Issues and Risks

1. Create a vision that integrates a common set of aviation tools that will support the three WMO Met Watch Offices (Honolulu, Anchorage, and Kansas City) on a fully functional AWIPS II system.