

CEILING HEIGHT AND SURFACE VISIBILITY INFORMATION ON THE MULTI-FORMAT FORECAST INFORMATION WEB PAGE

PRODUCT/SERVICE DESCRIPTION DOCUMENT (PDD)

TYPE: Experimental Product

DATE: May 18, 2006

Part 1 - Mission Connection

1. Product/Service Description:

Advances in computer capabilities and web services technologies, as well as scientific advances in National Weather Service (NWS) software, have afforded an opportunity for the NWS to create ceiling height and surface visibility customer-based products and services. Information dissemination via the world wide web (www) allows customers to obtain higher resolution ceiling height and surface visibility information in a variety of formats on demand.

2. Purpose/Intended Use:

This version of an interactive forecast information web page is being made available to:

- Allow aviation users to access ceiling height and surface visibility information that is always current with higher resolution than is possible in traditional text forecast products.
- Allow aviation customers to view ceiling height and surface visibility information retrieved directly from locally prepared forecast grids in a variety of formats, including icons, text, tabular, and graphic.
- Receive feedback from those users on potential refinements to interactive information retrieval.

3. Audience:

The current audience for the ceiling height and surface visibility information consists of the general aviation community.

4. Presentation Format:

The web grid point forecasts are presented for display as HTML in text, hourly meteogram, and digital/tabular format. The forecasts can be viewed using a web browser, and then selected on a map location or by entering specified latitude and longitude coordinates. A sample of this web page can be found at http://www.erh.noaa.gov/zerh/Experimental_Meteogram_CigVis.JPG.

5. Feedback Method:

We are always seeking to improve our products based on user feedback. Therefore, users of this experimental product are asked to complete the survey located at <http://products.weather.gov/>. The users should send their completed surveys to NWSProducts@noaa.gov. Comments will be compiled and evaluated by June, 2007. Technical questions may be addressed via e-mail to: Jason.Franklin@noaa.gov.

Part 2 - Technical

1. Format and Science Basis:

Grid point forecasts can be viewed in text, hourly meteogram, and digital/tabular format. Data are extracted from the Graphical Forecast Editor (GFE) program on a routine basis, then processed and sent to the NWS Central Region Web Server. Data are available at a spatial resolution of 5 kilometers. Data fields include ceiling height and surface visibility.

2. Availability:

Updates to grid point forecasts are made once an hour from the existing GFE database. These updates are generally available at quarter past every hour.

3. Additional Information:

Initially, sites providing ceiling height and surface visibility information are:

In Central Region:

Jackson, KY

In Eastern Region:

Charleston, WV

Sites at Pittsburgh, PA and Greenville-Spartanburg, SC are scheduled to begin providing ceiling height and surface visibility information beginning Fall 2006.

Access to these forecast offices web pages can be made by navigating from the National Weather Service web page: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov> and from regional web sites.