

Product/Service Description Document
Experimental TRACON Forecasts

Part I - Mission Connection

- a. Product/Service Description - The web based TRACON Forecast provides categorical convective guidance for specific locations in the National Airspace System (NAS) allowing for more accurate air traffic management.
- b. Product Type - Experimental
- c. Purpose - The purpose of this experimental web page is to provide the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the airlines with expanded weather information. This expanded information begins to address a gap in the NWS convective product suite and the Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (TAF). Specific forecast products are not available that forecast convective weather at aeronautical arrival and departure fixes (known as 'gates'). Thunderstorm impact at or near these gates has a significant impact on the flow of aircraft through the NAS causing delays. This will allow critical partners and customers to make more informed decisions regarding the air traffic flow through the NAS.
- d. Audience - The target audience for this experimental product is the FAA and airline dispatchers.
- e. Presentation Format - A variety of presentation formats are used on the enhanced web page including graphical forecast information, and text based information.
- f. Feedback Method -

Technical and content-related comments for this website may be addressed to:

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Comment period: 8/10/09 to 8/31/10

Part II - Technical Description

- a) Format and Science Basis
There is a noted gap in the NWS product suite regarding convective weather forecasts from an aerial perspective. TAFs are designed to forecast convective weather within a small radius of a given airport. The Collaborative Convective Forecast Product (CCFP) provides some guidance regarding aerial thunderstorm coverage over large areas, for convective weather that meets a specified set of criteria. Forecasters will issue probabilistic convective forecasts for individual arrival/departure gates, or for groups of gates depending on airspace configuration. This is presented in a color-coded graphical form.
- b) Methods to Construct Page
The TRACON forecast graphics are created via software on the AWIPS Remote Display (ARD) at the CWSU. PHP code is used to generate all webpage

content. Some web-based database interaction (MySQL) is expected as the information available on these webpages is expanded.

c) Availability - The website will run 24 hours per day and be monitored by NWS staff.

d) Evaluation and Testing

An example of this TRACON forecast is available at:

http://www.erh.noaa.gov/zny/zny_tracon.php This may be used as an example for evaluation purposes. The page will be monitored to ensure accuracy and timeliness of the information provided. In addition, users will be solicited for feedback on the page, and changes made in a rapid prototype environment to best meet the needs of the users. This TRACON forecast will be available for all major TRACON areas in Eastern Region.