Release Notes
AvnFPS OB9.2
(New Functionality)
20 October 2009

Table of Contents

Section I: AvnFPS OB9.2 Release Notes **21 October 2009**
New Functionality

1.0 Introduction [Return to TOC]

The Aviation Forecast Preparation System, AvnFPS, is designed to ease monitoring, improve production, and facilitate Quality Control (QC) of Terminal Aerodrome Forecasts (TAFs). AvnFPS monitoring capability gives forecasters quick and continuous feedback on TAFs as well as associated observations. This monitoring capability consists of a color coded scheme that is site-, and now, user-configurable. The TAFs, the guidance, and the current observations are displayable as both text and graphics. The display of either text or graphics is controlled by the forecaster. The local office also has another feature when it comes to amendment criteria, the local office can configure each airport to display additional criteria such as cross winds and different ceilings & visibility thresholds.

This section of the Release Notes provides a high level description of the new features available in AvnFPS OB9.2.

The AvnFPS OB9.2 User's Guide has the following URL:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/mdl/pgb/AvnFPS/OB9.2/AvnFPS OB9.2.html

2.0 New Functionality [Return to TOC]

A new monitoring paradigm--evaluating differences between observed and forecasted categories, introduced in OB9--is now considered operational. Known as Categorical Amendment Criteria (CAC) monitoring, this new concept also changes the monitoring aspects of AvnFPS to emphasize to the forecaster the resulting impacts of the TAF on customers' and airports' operations. The paradigm consists of new rules and a new indicator, 'cat', which replaces the 'cig' and 'vis' indicators in the Monitoring GUI. Documentation on the new concept, along with instructions to enable it, can be found here. Alternative instructions to turn on CAC monitoring are found in the FAQ as well.

Other minor bugs were fixed and very small enhancements done as the opportunity arose during the long OB9.2 gestation period. In the following paragraphs, additional details describing the changes to AvnFPS are provided.

> Syntax checking on the use of No Significant Weather (NSW) in the TAF was present prior to OB9.2 but produced confusing feedback and erroneous information to the forecaster. This portion of the TAF Decoder was re-written to correct the deficiencies and ensure conformity with NWSI 10-813 instructions on the use of NSW.

Section I: AvnFPS OB9.2 Release Notes **21 October 2009**

New Functionality

The use of variable wind, e.g., VRB06KT, in non-convective events in the TAF is more rigorously checked against the NWSI 10-813 instructions.

TAFs' AMD LTD TO … and AMD NOT SKED … statements are now examined for correctness when the TAF Syntax check button is pressed in the TAF Editor.

The AdjustTimes tool in the TAF Editor has been enhanced to change references to time in the AMD LTD TO … or AMD NOT SKED statements, or remove the entire statement, as appropriate. Issuance of TAFs with 'expired' AMD clauses, such as the one below, should become much less frequent:

```
TAF AMD
XXXX 191450Z 1915/2012 33006KT P6SM -SHRA SCT015 OVC025
      TEMPO 1915/1918 BKN030 OVC035
     FM191800 16007KT P6SM -SHRA SCT025 BKN050
     FM200300 31008KT P6SM VCSH SCT040 BKN080
      AMD LTD TO CLD VIS AND WIND TIL 191300=
```

Determining whether TAFs are sent as a collective is no longer a forecaster's resource setting, but now an attribute of the TAF product. A new collective text window appears in the TAF Product GUI to allow Aviation Focal Points to fill in this field, if desired. This attribute more properly 'belongs' with TAF product and not as a forecaster's resource. By moving this property to the TAF product, backup WFOs do not have to remember if the 'downed' WFO issues their TAFs as a collective – provided they've set this field properly beforehand!

Also the TAF Product GUI has been enhanced to check for consistency between the afos2awips.txt file and the TAFs' info.cfg files when the 'Save' button is pressed. By checking ahead of time, most of the issues affecting the handleOUP.pl script in sending the TAF(s) out will be readily identified under less stressful conditions.

AvnFPS TEMPO monitoring via the 'tpo' indicator is more aggressive in alerting forecasters to forecasted situations that have not occurred within `tempograceperiod` interval while a TEMPO group is in effect.

For TAF Impact writers, sky condition, wind direction, speed and gusts are now available for use in the expr field.

'skystr'	Entire sky condition in the TAF, e.g., 'FEW005 SCT015 BKN055'
wind[n].dd	Wind direction in the TAF in whole degrees, e.g., 150, 360, 10, etc.
wind[n].ff	Wind speed in the TAF
wind[n].gg	Wind gust in the TAF

Section I: AvnFPS OB9.2 Release Notes **21 October 2009**

New Functionality

Forecasters now have three new resources affecting AvnFPS behavior and can be accessed from the Forecaster Resource Dialog:

*alwaysSaveToDB (default: off)	If selected, TAFs are written to the text database as well as the tmp directory when 'Save' button is pressed in the TAF Editor.
*showRoutine (default: on)	If selected, when guidance is converted into TAF, the initial format is for regular issuance.
*checkPendingQueue (default on)	If selected, when forecaster attempts to edit TAF(s) of the same type that is in the pending queue, they will be warned prior to removing forecasts from the queue.

Prior to OB9.2, ASOS reporting UP (unknown precipitation) resulted in a greyed out 'wx' indicator which deprived the forecaster of unusual conditions that might be occurring at the observing site, such as freezing rain. With OB9.2 software, 'wx' indicator will go light green if 'UP' appears in the METAR and alert the forecaster.

By Aviation Services Branch direction, the CCFP (Collaborative Convective Forecast Product) monitoring rules now behave in the following manner: if TS or CB does not appear in the forecast, and CCFP guidance is as follows, then the cell background color is the 'ccfp' indicator color.

Low confidence, spare coverage	High confidence, sparse coverage (25-49%)
Low confidence, medium coverage	High confidence, medium coverage (50-74%)
Low confidence, solid coverage	High confidence, solid coverage (75-100%)

Wind Rose Climate tool can generate images and KML files suitable for displaying in Google Earth.

Section I: AvnFPS OB9.2 Release Notes **21 October 2009**

New Functionality