

General Explanation of Implementation Schedule

Last Update: December 4, 2006

Introduction. Several key National Weather Service (NWS) hydrologic products will undergo significant changes during 2006 and 2007. These changes can be summarized as implementation of a new segmented format and Valid Time Event Code, or VTEC. Several schedule delays have been necessary in the past due to difficulties with implementing the software applications used to generate the products. This document provides the latest available plan for implementing VTEC in hydrologic products.

Product Segmentation -

Flood Warnings For Forecast Points

Areal Flood Warnings

Areal Flood Advisories

The NWS has 122 weather forecast offices (WFO). During the first half of 2006, all WFOs began issuing areal flood warnings, areal flood advisories, and flood warnings for forecast points in a segmented format. Note: flash flood statements (the follow-up product for flash flood warnings) have been segmented since December, 2004.

VTEC Implementation -

Flood Warnings for Forecast Points

Flood Watches for Forecast Points

Flood Advisories for Forecast Points

Risk Reduction. Beginning on April 17, 2006, selected WFOs began a risk reduction activity involving issuance of flood warnings, watches, and advisories for forecast points with experimental VTEC (i.e., Product Class code "X"). Eventually, 42 out of 122 WFOs were participating in this risk reduction activity. This activity was described in [Service Change Notice 06-10](#) and officially ended on November 30, 2006. WFOs participating in this risk reduction activity and the dates they began participating are listed in the "WFO Schedule for Implementation of VTEC" table on this web page.

Operational Test and Evaluation. In June 2006, some of the risk reduction WFOs began participating in an official test known as an Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E). This OT&E was an internal-NWS evaluation of VTEC in flood products for forecast points and was transparent to external users since it involved WFOs that were already providing VTEC as part of the risk reduction activity. The OT&E was completed on November 30, 2006.

National Implementation. If the OT&E is deemed successful (decision in Jan., 2007), flood warnings, watches, and advisories for forecast points with VTEC will become nationally operational on July 17, 2007. Before July 17 and assuming a successful OT&E, WFOs participating in the previously described risk reduction activity will continue issuing their operational flood warnings, watches, and advisories for forecast points with VTEC using the "X" product class code right up to the national operational date. Also, as the other WFOs receive the necessary issuance applications during the winter and spring of 2007, they will begin including VTEC in

their flood products for forecast points using the “X” code. Therefore, all 122 WFOs will be able to include VTEC in their flood products for forecast points before July 17, 2007, and the only thing that will actually occur on that date will be a switch from using the “X” code to the “O” code. Note: areal flood watches currently already have operational VTEC.

VTEC Implementation -

Flash Flood Products

Areal Flood Warnings

Areal Advisories

Risk Reduction. In the February, 2007 time frame, selected WFOs will begin providing experimental VTEC in their areal flood products – i.e., flash flood products (flash flood warnings and statements), areal flood warnings (and follow-up statements), and areal advisories - as part of a risk reduction activity. The number of WFOs that will be participating in this risk reduction activity is still being determined. They will be listed in the “Schedule for Implementation of VTEC in Areal Flood Products” table, which is linked to from web page, once the information is available.

Operational Test and Evaluation. In the April–May 2007 time frame, certain risk reduction WFOs will begin issuing their areal flood products with experimental VTEC as part of an official OT&E of the upgraded product generation application. This OT&E will be an internal-NWS evaluation of VTEC in areal flood products and will be transparent to external users since it involves WFOs that will already be providing VTEC as part of the risk reduction activity.

National Implementation. Following a successful OT&E, the areal flood products with VTEC will become nationally operational in the November, 2007 time frame. Before then and assuming a successful OT&E, WFOs participating in the previously described risk reduction activity will continue issuing their operational areal flood products with VTEC using the “X” product class code right up to the national operational date. Also, as the other WFOs receive the necessary issuance applications during the summer and fall of 2007, they will begin including VTEC in their areal flood products using the “X” code. Therefore, all 122 WFOs will be able to include VTEC in their areal flood products before the date of operational implementation, and the only thing that will actually occur on that date will be a switch from using the “X” code to the “O” code.