

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SOUTHERN REGION SUPPLEMENT 04-2003
APPLICABLE TO NWSI 10-310
November 16, 2018***

***Operations and Services
Marine and Coastal Weather Services, NWSPD 10-3
Marine Weather NWSI 10-310***

SOUTHERN REGION COASTAL MARINE FORECAST SERVICES

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Type of Issuance: Routine.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This supplement supersedes Southern Region Supplement 04-03 certification memo dated December 20, 2013, filed with NWSI 10-310.

The following changes were made to this issuance:

1. Removed redundant policy that was in the overarching Directive.
2. Removed rip current and SRF Zone information, which was moved to Directive 10-320.

<signed>

November 2, 2018

Steven G. Cooper
Regional Director

Date

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1 Introduction

This supplement provides additional guidance and instructions for the Coastal Waters Forecast (CWF). Written instructions cannot address every situation. Operational personnel must exercise initiative and professional judgment to minimize risk to public safety and property in instances when written instructions do not provide appropriate guidance.

2 Coastal Waters Forecasts

2.1 Abbreviations

Abbreviations and contractions will not be used in the main body of the forecast. This will allow the marine products to be read with ease by customers and partners. Additionally, the information can be easily heard on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards.

2.2 Forecast Issuance

The exact issuance times of the CWF can vary by office due to local partner needs. Two daily issuances are mandatory: in the early morning between 3-6am and in the afternoon between 3-6pm. In SR it is highly recommended that two updates are also issued: between 8-11am and another update between 8-11pm.

2.3 Forecast Content

a. Regional Definitions. (Reference Appendix A of NWSI 10-303.)

(1) SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY

The criteria for issuing a SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY (SCA) in Southern Region are average wind speeds of 20 knots or greater, and forecast seas of 7 feet or greater. When wind speeds are below 20 knots, A SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY FOR HAZARDOUS SEAS (SCAHS) will be issued for sea/wave conditions deemed locally significant, based on user needs, and should be no lower than 7 feet. **Conditions must occur for two or more hours to validate an SCA or SCAHS forecast.** SCAs will be headlined when criteria are met, or expected to be met, for the first period, and SCAs may be issued that begin in the second and third periods when forecaster confidence is high. SCAs beginning in the first, second, or third period may extend beyond the third period as conditions warrant. SCAs will not be initiated beyond the third period.

(2) SMALL CRAFT SHOULD EXERCISE CAUTION

The cautionary statement “SMALL CRAFT SHOULD EXERCISE CAUTION” (SCEC) will be headlined for conditions forecast just below SCA criteria **during the first period only.** Specifically, the criteria for headlining SCEC in Southern Region are a wind forecast of 15 TO 20 knots (with the assumption that 20 knot winds will not occur for two hours) **and/or** seas

forecast at 6 feet. If the seas forecast is the reason for the SCEC, WFOs may include a headline in the SCEC documenting that reason. For example, "SMALL CRAFT SHOULD EXERCISE CAUTION UNTIL SEAS SUBSIDE."

2.4 Forecast Parameters and Elements

a. Seas/Waves. (Reference section 2.3.8.b of NWSI 10-310.)

- (1) SR WFOs may provide sea state information as either combined sea height (i.e., significant wave height) or a separate wind sea and swell phrase. An example for each is provided below:

Example: Significant Wave Height:
SEAS 8 TO 10 FEET.

Example: Wind Seas and Swell:
WIND WAVES 2 TO 4 FEET... NORTHEAST SWELL 10 FEET.

Note that whenever a SWELL is specified, include the direction from which the swell is propagating, to 8 points of the compass.

- (2) SR WFOs may provide dominant wave period information, following either the significant wave height or wind seas and swell phrase. Dominant wave period (seconds) is the period with the maximum wave energy. See examples below:

Example: Significant Wave Height and Dominant Period:
SEAS 8 TO 10 FEET. DOMINANT PERIOD 9 SECONDS.

Example: Wind Sea and Swell and Dominant Period:
WIND WAVE 2 TO 4 FEET...NORTHEAST SWELL 10 FEET.
DOMINANT PERIOD 5 SECONDS.

- (3) Inland waters and bays exempted from having detailed sea state predictions should use a general description of sea conditions (i.e., rough, choppy, etc.) when it helps convey the severity of a given situation.

Instead of forecasting wave heights on the inland waters and bays, descriptive terms can be used. This is because the bottom topography (depth) affects the maximum height of the waves when the depth of the water is less than one half the wave length of the waves. If sections of the intracoastal waterways are only 4 feet deep and the wind is north at 25 knots, you could not have waves any greater than this depth, but there would certainly be very rough conditions for small boats. The following table may be used for a first approximation:

DESCRIPTIVE TERM	WIND SPEED
Smooth	Calm or less than 5 KT
Light Chop	5 to 10 KT
Moderate Chop	10 to 15 KT
Choppy	15 to 20 KT
Rough	20 to 25 KT
Very Rough	>25 KT

Fetch (the distance traveled by wind or waves across open water) needs appropriate consideration on the inland waters since they are surrounded by the mainland and barrier islands. For marginal choppy conditions, the phrase INLAND WATERS CHOPPY IN EXPOSED AREAS may be included.

APPENDIX A – Wind Forecast Ranges for issuing SCAs and Gale Storm Warnings

The accepted forecast ranges for SCA's are:

15 to 25 knots,
20 knots,
20 to 25 knots, 25 knots, 20 to 30 knots
25 to 30 knots, 30 knots.

Accepted forecast wind speed ranges for Gale Storm Warnings:

25 to 35 knots, 30 to 35 knots, 35 knots, 35 to 40 knots, 30 to 40 knots, 40 knots,
35 to 45 knots, 40 to 45 knots, 45 knots