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Public Information Statement 23-22
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
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To: Subscribers:
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From: Greg Schoor, Chief
 Marine, Tropical, and Tsunami Services Branch

Subject: Soliciting Comments on Proposed Changes to the Format and
Delivery of NWS High Seas Forecast Information through May 4, 2023

The NWS is accepting public comments until May 4, 2023 on a proposal to revolutionize the format and delivery of wind, wave and visibility hazard information for high seas areas in the North Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This includes potential changes to the format of the NWS High Seas Forecast (HSF) text products to reference polygons that represent a hazard area over a 24-hour forecast period rather than at a snapshot in time as they are currently identified. These areas will be determined using gridded 10-m wind and significant wave height forecasts available in the National Digital Forecast Database (NDFD) as well as visibility forecasts. However, the gridded forecast and polygon hazard data are proposed to be made available in the Universal Hydrographic Data Model format known generically as "S-100." More information on the S-100 format can be found at:

<https://marinenavigation.noaa.gov/s100.html#:~:text=What%20is%20S%2D100%3F,19000%20series%20of%20geographic%20standards>

Details on the proposed changes and examples can be found on the following webpage:

<https://www.weather.gov/marine/NewHSFormat2023>

The United States provides warnings for wind and wave conditions in METAREAs IV (Atlantic) and XII (Pacific) as designated by World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Publication Number 558 Part 1, Appendix I.1. "Metareas And Designated National Meteorological And Hydrological Services For The Issue Of Meteorological Maritime Safety Information For The Worldwide Met-Ocean Information And Warning Service" (pages 11-12), which is available here:

https://etrp.wmo.int/pluginfile.php/20256/mod_resource/content/3/WMO-No.558-2012-2018_en.pdf

More information about the Worldwide Met-Ocean Information and Warning Service can be found at:

<https://wwmiws.wmo.int/>

The specifications of the current NWS HSF product can be found in NWS Instruction (NWSI) 10-311, "Offshore, NAVTEX, High Seas, and Marine Forecast Services," section 5, "High Seas Forecast":

<https://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/sym/pd01003011curr.pdf>

In addition to the proposed changes to the HSF text product, the NWS is proposing to issue "Individual Warnings" for distinct weather systems (e.g., a tropical cyclone, a hurricane-force low, gap winds). Like the HSF, the Individual Warnings would reference the polygon hazard areas, but the Individual Warnings could be updated at any time of the day instead of on the set HSF issuance cycle. This would allow for the provision of more accurate analyses and forecasts for quickly evolving weather conditions. The proposed future HSF will include a listing of all of the hazard polygons within the METAREA that are included in the active Individual Warnings at the issuance time.

To provide comments on the proposed changes to the HSF, including the potential addition of Individual Warnings and geographical hazard information in S-100 format, please use the feedback form linked below:

<https://ocean.weather.gov/survey-hsf-polygons/>

Alternatively, you can provide comments via email to:

Wayne Presnell
National Marine Services Program
National Weather Service
Analyze, Forecast and Support Office
Email: wayne.presnell@noaa.gov

The NWS will evaluate all comments on the proposed changes to the HSF and determine whether to proceed. If public feedback supports this change, a Service Change Notice will be sent before it becomes effective.

If you have questions regarding the proposal, please contact:

Joseph Sienkiewicz, Chief
Ocean Applications Branch
NOAA/NWS Ocean Prediction Center
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National Public Information Statements are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification/>

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