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Service Change Notice 22-15
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
300 PM EST Thu Jan 6 2022

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From: Darren Wright, Acting Chief
 Marine, Tropical and Tsunami Services Branch

Subject: Changes to Atlantic Offshore Forecast Zones for the Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch of the National Hurricane Center: Effective March 22, 2022

On or about Tuesday, March 22, 2022, at 4:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), 2000 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch (TAFB) of the National Hurricane Center in Miami, FL will change Offshore Forecast Zones for the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean south of 31N and west of 55W. Zones will be increased in number in order to provide more specific forecast information as well as be updated to provide more precise wording.

If March 22, 2022 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation will be postponed to March 29, 2022.

TAFB is planning to further divide some of the Offshore Forecast Zones in the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, and Atlantic Ocean to increase the precision of the forecast products. Some of the existing zones are fairly large and encompass a diverse array of local climatological regimes. Dividing these zones into smaller zones will allow TAFB forecasters to add important detail without making the wording overly complex. In addition to basing the new zone boundaries on the particular wind and sea conditions that typically occur in each area, the newly formed zones are designed to align with nearby state and national borders and neighboring zones.

The 32 existing zones will become 52 zones as well as eight new zones being created, which previously were only part of our High Seas domain. This would bring the total of our Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean zones to 60.

The changes in the Gulf of Mexico will be:

- GMZ011 (NW Gulf including Stetson Bank) will be designated as GMZ040. No further changes to this zone.

- GMZ013 (N Central Gulf including Flower Garden Banks Marine Sanctuary) will be split along 91W. The resultant zones will be GMZ041 (SW Louisiana

Offshore Waters including Flower Garden Banks Marine Sanctuary) and GMZ042 (N Central Gulf N of 26N between 87W and 91W).

- The boundary between GMZ015 (NE Gulf N of 25N E of 87W) and GMZ021 (E Gulf from 22N to 25N E of 87W including Straits Of Florida) will be repositioned northward to 26N. GMZ015 Will become GMZ043 (NE Gulf N of 26N E of 87W) and GMZ021 Will become GMZ047 (E Gulf from 22N to 26N E of 87W Including Straits of Florida).

- GMZ017 (W Central Gulf from 22N to 26N W of 94W) will be designated as GMZ044. No further changes to this zone.

- GMZ019 (Central Gulf from 22N to 26N between 87W and 94W) will be split along 91W. The resultant zones will be GMZ045 (W Central Gulf from 22N to 26N between 91W and 94W) and GMZ046 (Central Gulf from 22N to 26N between 87W and 91W).

- GMZ023 (SW Gulf S of 22N W of 94W) will be designated as GMZ048. No further changes to this zone.

- GMZ025 (SW Gulf S of 22N W of 94W) will split along 92W. The resultant zones will be GMZ049 (Central Bay of Campeche S of 22N between 92W and 94W) and GMZ050 (E Bay of Campeche S of 22N between 87W and 92W).

The changes in the Caribbean Sea will be:

- AMZ011 (Caribbean N of 18N W of 85W including Yucatan Basin) will be designated AMZ040. No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ013 (Caribbean N of 18N between 76W and 85W including Cayman Basin) will be split along 20N, and again along 80W south of 20N. The resultant zones will be:

* AMZ041 (NW Caribbean N of 20N E of 85W)

* AMZ042 (Caribbean from 18N to 20N between 80W and 85W including Cayman Basin)

* AMZ043 (Caribbean from 18N to 20N between 76W and 80W).

- AMZ015 (Caribbean Approaches to the Windward Passage) will be designated as AMZ044. No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ017 (Gulf of Honduras) will become AMZ045 (Caribbean S of 18N W of 85W including Gulf of Honduras). No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ019 (Caribbean from 15N to 18N between 80W and 85W) will be designated as AMZ046. No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ021 (Caribbean from 15N to 18N between 72W and 80W) will be split along 76W. The resultant zones will be AMZ047 (Caribbean from 15N to 18N between 76W and 80W) and AMZ048 (Caribbean from 15N to 18N between 72W and 76W).

- AMZ023 (Caribbean N of 15N between 64W and 72W) will be split along 68W. The resultant zones will be AMZ049 (Caribbean N of 15N between 68W and 72W) and AMZ050 (Caribbean N of 15N between 64W and 68W).

- AMZ025 (Offshore Waters Leeward Islands) will be designated as AMZ051. No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ027 (Tropical N Atlantic from 15N to 19N between 55W and 60W) will be designated as AMZ052. No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ029 (W Central Caribbean from 11N to 15N W of 80W) will be designated as AMZ053. No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ031 (Caribbean from 11N to 15N between 72W and 80W including Colombia Basin) will be split along 76W. The resultant zones will be AMZ054 (Caribbean from 11N to 15N between 76W and 80W) and AMZ055 (Caribbean from 11N to 15N between 72W and 76W)

AMZ033 (Caribbean S of 15N between 64W and 72W including Venezuela Basin) will split along 68W. The resultant zones will be:
AMZ056 (Caribbean S of 15N between 68W and 72W) AMZ057 (Caribbean S of 15N between 64W and 68W)

- AMZ035 (Offshore Waters Windward Islands including Trinidad and Tobago) will be designated AMZ058. No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ037 (Tropical N Atlantic from 07N to 15N between 55W and 60W) will be split along 11N. The resultant zones are AMZ059 (Tropical N Atlantic from 11N to 15N between 55W and 60W) and AMZ062 (Tropical N Atlantic from 07N to 11N).

AMZ039 (SW Caribbean S of 11N including Approaches to Panama Canal) will be split along 80W. The resultant zones will be AMZ060 (SW Caribbean S of 11N W of 80W) and AMZ061 (SW Caribbean S of 11N E of 80W including Approaches to Panama Canal).

The changes in the Southwest North Atlantic Ocean will be:

- AMZ111 (Atlantic from 27N to 31N W of 77W) will be split along 29N. The resultant zones will be AMZ063 (Atlantic from 29N to 31N W of 77W) and AMZ069 (Atlantic from 27N to 29N W of 77W).

- AMZ113 (Atlantic from 27N to 31N between 70W and 77W) will split along both 29N and 74W. The resulting four zones will be:

* AMZ064 (Atlantic from 29N to 31N between 74W and 77W)

* AMZ065 (Atlantic from 29N to 31N between 70W and 74W)

* AMZ070 (Atlantic from 27N to 29N between 74W and 77W)

* AMZ071 (Atlantic from 27N to 29N between 70W and 74W).

- AMZ115 (Atlantic from 27N to 31N between 65W and 70W) will be divided along 29N. The resultant zones will be AMZ066 (Atlantic from 29N to 31N between 65W and 70W) and AMZ072 (Atlantic from 27N to 29N between 65W and 70W).

The following will be new zones:

- AMZ067 (Atlantic from 29N to 31N between 60W and 65W)
- AMZ068 (Atlantic from 29N to 31N between 55W and 60W)
- AMZ073 (Atlantic from 27N to 29N between 60W and 65W)
- AMZ074 (Atlantic from 27N to 29N between 55W and 60W).

- AMZ117 (Bahamas including Cay Sal Bank) will be split along 24N. The resultant zones will be AMZ075 (Northern Bahamas from 24N to 27N) and AMZ080 (Central Bahamas from 22N to 24N including Cay Sal Bank).

- AMZ119 (Atlantic from 22N to 27N E of Bahamas to 70W) will be split along 25N. The resultant zones will be AMZ076 (Atlantic from 25N to 27N E of Bahamas to 70W) and AMZ081 (Atlantic from 22N to 25N E of Bahamas to 70W).

AMZ121 (Atlantic from 22N to 27N between 65W and 70W) will be split along 25N. The resultant zones are:
AMZ077 (Atlantic from 25N to 27N between 65W and 70W) AMZ082 (Atlantic from 22N to 25N between 65W and 70W)

The following will be new zones:

- AMZ078 (Atlantic from 25N to 27N between 60W and 65W)
- AMZ079 (Atlantic from 25N to 27N between 55W and 60W)
- AMZ083 (Atlantic from 22N to 25N between 60W and 65W)
- AMZ084 (Atlantic from 22N to 25N between 55W and 60W).

- AMZ123 (Atlantic S of 22N W of 70W including Approaches to the Windward Passage) will be designated as AMZ085. No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ125 (Atlantic S of 22N between 65W and 70W including Puerto Rico Trench) will be designated as AMZ086. No further changes to this zone.

- AMZ127 (Atlantic from 19N to 22N between 55W and 65W) will be split along 60W. The resultant zones are AMZ087 (Atlantic from 19N to 22N between 60W and 65W) and AMZ088 (Atlantic from 19N to 22N between 55W and 60W).

NWS products affected by these offshore forecast zone changes:

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Offshore Waters Forecast for the SW and Tropical N Atlantic and Caribbean Sea	FZNT23 KNHC	OFFNT3
Offshore Waters Forecast for the Gulf of Mexico	FZNT24 KNHC	OFFNT4

NWS partners and users should take the appropriate action to ensure systems recognize the new Universal Geographic Codes (UGCs) and new zone names.

Updated offshore marine zone shapefiles are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/gis/MarineZones>

A story map describing these proposed changes in detail can be found at:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ebc71a5d460d4a6e952f90d5578d87db>

and at:

<https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/marine/>

For more information, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

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

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