



Aware

Aware is published by NOAA's National Weather Service to enhance communications between NWS and the Emergency Management Community and other government and Private Sector Partners.

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Major Change Coming For NOAA Weather Wire Service

By [Gregory Zwicker](#), NWS Program Manager

The NOAA Weather Wire Service (NWS) provides the NWS Enterprise Architecture Solution (NWS-2) experimental products on the Satellite Broadcast Network (Satellite Broadcast Network/NOAAPORT). NWS will offer dual operations, legacy and NWS-2, until May 31, 2015, to accommodate partner transitions. Here is a quick breakdown:

- ◆ **SBN/NOAAPORT Channels 101-105: AVAILABLE**
All NWS products include NWS products: no change
- ◆ **SBN/NOAAPORT Channel 201: AVAILABLE**
NWS products only: experimental

If you are a C-band satellite users, you can continue to get data from the outdoor antennas you have in place. You won't have to re-point your antenna but you will need a new satellite receiver, new Low Noise Block Converter, and new or modified weather data processing/display software.

You can improve overall product availability performance by using a larger antenna dish or including a band pass filter. NWS is evaluating alternate performance improvement options. NWS-2 Open Interface over the Internet is available during the transitional period.

The NWS-2 will require both the SBN/NOAAPORT Channel 201 and the NIDS Open-Interface to ensure high product availability. You can also access the End User Client for SBN/NOAAPORT and Open Interface product streams.



NWS Works to Improve Impact Based Decision Support

By [Tania Fransen](#), WCM, NWS Glasgow, MT



John Wooden, former UCLA basketball coach, sums up his thoughts on leadership.

The key to better serving NWS partners and users is working together. With that aim, 14 NWS staff from five Montana and Idaho forecast offices, NWS Western Region (WR) Regional Operations Center, and the NWS Employee organization met to brainstorm ways to improve Impact Based Decision Support (IDSS) and move towards a more Weather-Ready Nation.

The goals were to better understand the philosophies and tools being used to provide IDSS; work toward an appropriate level of consistency with messaging, and share best practices. We also discussed hurdles we have encountered and how to work through them. Topics included:

- ◆ Using operations levels in the forecast office based on workload to support IDSS
- ◆ Providing flexibility to switch staff responsibilities or to bring in additional help
- ◆ Reducing workload, either through elimination or automation and new technologies
- ◆ Determining impacts when looking at advisories vs. warnings, and proving the ability to update these impacts from one year to the next
- ◆ Retooling NWS local education and outreach to ensure maximum impact when working with our partners and to support a Weather-Ready Nation
- ◆ Improving communications with partners and the public through outlets such as weather stories, social media, videos, and one-on-one calls
- ◆ Integrating new and future technology and tools into operations
- ◆ Improving consistency among offices when looking at value based criteria, impact based criteria, shared topographically favorable areas
- ◆ Consistently branding the NWS web and social media presence for a clear look and feel
- ◆ Empowering NWS employees to improve staff morale and encourage decisive action in an IDSS paradigm

Video Adds Innovative Twist to Regional Conference

By [Krissy Hurley](#), WCM, NWS Amarillo, TX

When you hear the NWS is assisting with a regional emergency manager (EM) conference, you might think of an on-site briefing or a presentation; however, when the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) approached NWS Amarillo, TX, for assistance in a mass casualty exercise, an opportunity for innovation arose.

Forecaster Chris Morris, in coordination with Emily Nolte, Regional Preparedness Planner for PRPC, used video editing software to create videos for the exercise. The first video mimicked NWS decision support services depicting an imminent active severe weather outbreak. This [video](#) was shown during the introduction of the mass casualty exercise.

Once the attendees were divided into pre-designated groups based on their response role, NWS presented the [second video](#), which simulated media coverage a few hours after a devastating tornado rips through several panhandle communities. This second video was designed to put small groups into a response mindset.

Once participants were put in the response mind set, group leaders facilitated discussion in small groups to identify shortfalls based on the new Texas Department of State Health Services Mass Fatality Management Planning Toolkit.

The exercise and number of participants exceeded NWS expectations, drawing more than 200 EMs, first responders, county judges, and other decision makers from across the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles.



A simulated severe weather event video helps make exercise more dynamic.

Integrated Warning Team Workshop Focuses on Regional Approach to Complex Problems

By [Mark Strobin](#), WCM, NWS Midland, TX

On February 25, 2015, NWS Midland conducted its second Integrated Warning Team Workshop. The workshop aimed to improve communication of critical information during winter and fire weather related events. Forecasters Amber Hluchan and Rick Hluchan led the winter weather section of the IWT Workshop, using the 2015 New Years'

Ice Storm as the example, and Lead Forecaster Greg Murdoch led the Fire Weather portion of the IWT Workshop.

NWS Midland has weather warning responsibility for a large area encompassing 26 counties. Of those counties, 24 are in West Texas and 2 are in southeast New Mexico. To ensure NWS is reaching its core partners, we invited a large variety of potential partners.

About 70 of WFO Midland's partners attended the workshop including EMs, media, Independent School Districts (ISDs), fire departments, the Texas Forest Service, Texas Department of Transportation, police departments, Midland International Air and Space Port, and Oncor Electric. The main takeaways from the IWT Workshop were:



Senior Forecaster Greg Murdoch. Photo Courtesy: Brian Curren

- ◆ Take a regional approach to regional problems.
- ◆ Involve multiple partners in decision making during winter weather events.
- ◆ Focus on fire prevention. The public must know what *not* to do during fire risk weather.
- ◆ Ensure consistent messaging, whether the threat comes from fire, severe or winter weather.
- ◆ Expand use of NWSChat. This tool is a valuable resource because it provides a way for NWS staff to answer questions as well as for those EMs, law enforcement, ISDs, media, and others who wish to pass along reports. NWS Midland signed up additional core partners to NWSChat after the IWT Workshop.

Training Together Builds Relationships

By [Daniel Noah](#), WCM. NWS Tampa Bay, FL

How do you improve your working relationship with EMs and other partners? Take training together, especially hands-on advanced training your EMs are required to take.

Robert Garcia, meteorologist at NWS Tampa Bay, FL, did just that. He graduated from the 2015 [Florida Emergency Preparedness Association](#) (FEPA) Intermediate Emergency Management Academy in February. This 7-day academy mandated 12-14 hour days at its Camp Blanding, FL, location. Robert is the third NWS meteorologist in Florida to graduate from the academy.

The FEPA Intermediate Academy included practical exercises and activities in a unique EOC setting. It provides one of the best ways to understand and build strong relationships with partners.



NWS Meteorologist Robert Garcia, center, acted as the planning chief during an Emergency Operation Center activation exercise for multiple disasters in the fictional city of Happy Town.

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