NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
PRODUCT DESCRIPTION DOCUMENT (PDD)
TYPE: Official Product
DATE: April 16, 2003

AIRMAN'S METEROLOGICAL ADVISORIES (AIRMET)
(BULLETIN IDENTIFIER - WA) DRAFT 1.2

Part 1 - Mission Connection

1. **Product/Service Description:**
   AIRMETs are concise descriptions - in abbreviated language - of the development and occurrence or expected occurrence in time and space of specified en-route weather phenomena issued by the National Weather Services Aviation Weather Center, Alaskan Aviation Weather Unit, and Weather Forecast Office Honolulu. AIRMET phenomena can affect the safety of aircraft operations. Bulletins contain details of potentially hazardous conditions over the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, and adjacent waters. An AIRMET will be issued when any of the following weather phenomena occur and affect an area of at least 3,000 square miles:

   - Moderate icing,
   - Moderate turbulence,
   - Sustained surface wind of 30 knots or more,
   - Ceilings less than 1,000 feet and/or visibility less than miles affecting over 50 percent of an area at any one time or,
   - Extensive mountain obscuration (may be less than 3000 square miles for Pacific Ocean islands).

2. **Purpose/Intented Use:**
   AIRMETs are intended for dissemination to all pilots in flight to enhance safety, and are of particular concern to operators and pilots of aircraft sensitive to the phenomena described and to pilots without instrument ratings. They are issued in support of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) air traffic controllers and the National Airspace System (NAS).

3. **Audience:**
   The target audience for the product includes: general and commercial aviation, military and government agencies.

4. **Presentation Format:**
   Aviation Weather Center, Alaskan Aviation Weather Unit, and Weather Forecast Office Honolulu disseminate AIRMETs in text, bulletin format using approved ICAO contractions. The Aviation Weather Center also produces graphical AIRMETs which are available via the internet at the Aviation Weather Centers website - http://aviationweather.gov/.

5. **Feedback Method:**
   The National Weather Service is constantly seeking to improve its products based on user

feedback. Customers can provide continuous feedback through the Aviation Weather Center via their webmaster at http://aviationweather.gov, Alaskan Aviation Weather Unit via their webmaster at , Weather Forecast Office Honolulu via their webmaster at W-HFO.webmaster@noaa.gov, and via the e-mail link (below) to the Aviation Weather Services Branch, National Weather Service Headquarters. These four units also obtain feedback through meetings and service assessments with the national and international aviation community.

Technical and policy questions and comments regarding AIRMETs may be addressed to:

National Weather Service
Attn: Richard Stone W/OS23
Aviation Weather Services Program Manager
1325 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
e-mail: Richard.stone@noaa.gov

Part 2 - Technical

1. **Format and Science Basis:**
AIRMETs are issued to describe 3 main types of weather indicated by the series: Sierra, Tango, and Zulu. AIRMET Sierra describes IFR conditions and/or extensive mountain obscurations. AIRMET Tango describes moderate turbulence, sustained surface winds of 30 knots or greater, and/or non-convective low-level wind shear. AIRMET Zulu describes moderate icing and provides freezing level heights. Beginning with the first scheduled issuance for each UTC day, all subsequent scheduled or unscheduled bulletins for that UTC day are numbered sequentially for easier identification.

An AIRMET message will contain the following information as necessary and in the order indicated relating to the phenomena, which caused the AIRMET to be issued:

a. Location (using high level VORs),
b. Phenomena and its description,
c. If appropriate, level (Altitude), or vertical extent,
d. If appropriate, movement or expected movement using time and high level VOR locations,
e. If appropriate, the cause of phenomena,
f. Expected beginning and ending time of phenomena, if different from the bulletins valid time,
g. Remarks or,
h. Changes in intensity.

Examples of AIRMET format may be found on the Aviation Weather Center website at: http://aviationweather.gov/awc/awc-airmets.html, the Alaskan Aviation Weather Center website at: http://aawu.arh.noaa.gov and Weather Forecast Office Honolulu website at: http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/pages/aviation.html. To see the Alaska AIRMETs click on an area where an AIRMET is indicated, then on Area Forecast.

2. **Availability:**
   The Aviation Weather Center, Alaskan Aviation Weather Unit, and Weather Forecast Office Honolulu transmit AIRMET bulletins every 6 hours via their dissemination systems. An AIRMET is issued for each forecast area and will not contain unnecessary descriptive material. Unscheduled updates or amendments will be issued as needed. Customers can receive the product via the Internet, NOAAPORT, and WAFS, EMWIN, and SADIS Satellite Distribution Networks. Additional information on NWS aviation product dissemination is available at: http://weather.gov/om/disemsys.shtml

3. **Additional Information:**
   A description of AIRMET policy, area of responsibility, abbreviations and definitions, standards and guidelines, and methods of product dissemination are located in NWS Instruction 10-810 and 10-811 which is available via the Internet at:
   http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/010/operation_services.htm.