

Southwest Airlines – Rick Curtis

Presentation Abstract:

Southwest Airlines maintains a close partnership with the NWS at local, regional and national levels. We very much value this partnership, and we continually strive to build closer relationships through knowledge sharing opportunities. Southwest serves many airports around the Great Lakes area, we must work through a variety of weather challenges to our operations. I will discuss our operating thresholds, decision criteria, as well as our strategic and operational decision making process as it relates to the effects of weather on our operations.

Southwest Airlines also has over 100 aircraft equipped with water vapor sensors and reports over 40,000 upper air reports of wind, temperature and humidity every day. This data is used operationally the NWS WFOs and SWA Meteorology, and is also integrated into the HRRR model.

Southwest Airlines uses NWS TAFs exclusively for its operations. This presentation will also highlight the importance of these forecasts to airline operations. In addition, potential TAF problem areas will be discussed.