Meeting Summary: 2026 NWS Baltimore/Washington Aviation Users Forum
November 9, 2026 1:00 PM-2:45 PM EST

Attendees:

Michael Mathews (Meteorologist-in Charge, Washington Center CWSU), Nicole Starzec (Developer AWC), Jeff Meadows (All Nippon Airways), David Dillahunt (Southwest), Dan Bednar (NTSB Meteorology), Jessica Henricksen (Alaska Airlines Dispatch), Mike Graf (NWS AWC), Paul Suffern (NTSB Meteorology), Rashid Waqas (BWI ATM), Casey Fox (DCA Tower Manager), Kyle Struckmann (AWC NAM MIC), John Stranahan (United)

NWS Baltimore/Washington: Jim Lee, Chris Strong, Brian LaSorsa, Jeremy Geiger, Connor Belak, Katherine Humphreys, Kevin Rodriguez, Andrew Snyder (presenter, aviation program leader)

Presentation slides:

Primary presentation slides

Meeting notes/summary of comments:

- Student project ideas: From Kyle: Forecasting the biggest impacts on traffic management, e.g., strong NW wind for IAD (limits them to Runway 30) or thunderstorms. From David: Thunderstorm climatology for each of the TAF sites (percentage of observations that have thunder in them). Vicinity vs prevailing over time (how long they occur vs how long we have them in the TAF). The Phoenix office did something like this.
- Jim mentioned perhaps we can look into if there is anything else we can do to get the message out during these wind situations (in reference to Kyle's comments about IAD having issues earlier in the day). Mike asked if there is anything other than the TAF that can be used by the command center to improve SA. Kyle said impacts will happen even with a good forecast. AWC has certain wind thresholds programmed into the TAF board. That's something they use and brief at least every 2 hours for the top 30 airports. Is there anything we can improve with?
- From Michael Mathews: They did brief on today's wind. The main issue is at 21z, because there are more arriving aircraft at that time. The situation on this day was low end for wind speeds, but there has been increased sensitivity for implementing Runway 30 ops in recent years. The calls they do with PCT, towers, and ZDC TM are the most important. They are happy with our TAFs overall.
- Note from Mike Graf: VC is hard...because it's used differently at offices. Some will cover TRACONs 50 miles out, while others do not. The actual definition is 5-10nm.
- Michael Mathews presentation on CWSU initiatives
    - DCA: Busiest runway in US + complex airspace has led to FAA utilizing metering – scheduling aircraft movement to the second from takeoff to landing in an effort to reduce holding. Requires more communication on weather impacts; calls are

important. Rates can also be reduced when DCA tower requests operations that are opposite of what PCT is running for IAD.
    - IAD international departures: increased attention given to 5:00-7:30PM window halfway through SWAP season after being informed of the high priority of these flights arriving and departing on time. Participate in calls at 8:15AM and 4:00PM specific to IAD and PCT. Forecasts are issued to BOS airspace. Noted that wheels-up time is important; they would rather add more fuel and go out of the way around storms than to face a 30 minute delay for a storm to pass. Hourly updates on TAFs (when needed) are important because of this. Noted staffing at NY Center can affect routing options too. John Stranahan (United): for international flights, normally put in their routes the day before, but they show up to the FAA about 3 hours before. So, updates 3 hours or more would help to file timely re-routes. David mentioned that Southwest is similar.
    - Showed compression forecast product for ZDC airspace that has been a project the past few years. Compression is problematic for controllers because it can create spacing problems. It's more of an issue for planes arriving from NY airspace. Discussion whether to expand to include lower altitudes for PCT. Currently on website, but uncertain future with CWSU websites being eliminated in favor of aviationweather.gov (possibly email format).
    - Contact CWSU if you have any questions.
- Nicole Starzec presentation on aviationweather.gov
    - Question from Paul about whether CWSU sites will be hosted on aviationweather.gov in their current format, as most ATC pull the PDWB from those pages. Nicole: no, existing CWSU content will be integrated; separate CWSU pages will not exist. Paul suggested providing guidance since many CWSU pages host TRACON or tower specific information not found in PDWB or AWC. Nicole: yes, outreach is planned before the pages transition.
    - Demonstrations provided for observations, map options, level/time sliders, AFD pop-up, PDWB, TAF board, winter dashboard, archive mode, and outreach tools.
    - Question from Michael about archive mode and any plans to host data older than 30 days. With COSPA going away, there has been interest in other places to find archived data. Nicole: currently it's a storage space limitation with no plans for expanded data at this time.
    - Encouraged all to use the contact button at the top to send any questions or comments.
- Mike Graf (AWC)
    - His position and aviation program management are now housed under the Aviation Weather Center as part of NWS reorganization, AFS24 no longer exists under NWS HQ.
    - There are a couple publications for verification stats on VCTS/Prob30/TEMPO that could be useful based on previous conversation, though may be dated.
    - FAA has a new METAR status board **here**
    - Snow/ice/liquid probabilistic forecasts are located here - could be useful in forecasting deicing needs.

Open Forum

- Andrew/Brian mentioned that NWS freezing rain/ice forecasts are changing to radial ice from flat ice this winter due to stronger correlation with impacts to trees/power lines. Conversion factor is ~0.4, so don't be surprised by relatively lower totals in the forecast compared to the past.
- Michael Mathews: For towers or airlines, What do you consider a success during a high impact event? Is there any metric out there that someone uses that shows the actions taken were good or bad? At the CWSU, they can gauge based on how mad people are, but that's not measurable, and there may not be an easy answer. David said both sides (airlines and FAA) need to agree on what success is. Michael also noted that useful data may be proprietary to airlines and thus couldn't be used to measure collective performance. John commented but audio was breaking up, so Michael recommended contacting him offline.

No action items taken this meeting. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. The next meeting will likely be in November 2027.