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PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 26-17 Updated
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
1245 PM EST Tue Feb 17 2026

To: Subscribers:
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FROM: Kevin Stone
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Subject: Updated: Implementation of Mountain Wave Turbulence to the
Graphical AIRMETs: Effective April 30, 2026

Updated to correct the NWSI 10-811 turbulence category code reference as
xlink:title="MTNWAVE".

Effective April 30, 2026 at 1900 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the
Aviation Weather Center (AWC) is implementing the following changes to
enhance aviation safety:

- A "mountain wave" descriptor will be added to the high-level
and low-level turbulence polygons in the G-AIRMET product
when mountain wave activity is associated with the
turbulence flight hazard.
- Mountain wave attributes will also be included in the G-
AIRMET USWX XML and BUFR products for Turbulence. The WMO
Headers are LWHE00 KKCI and JUHE00 KKCI, respectively

There will be no other change to the existing turbulence G-AIRMET, and
dissemination methods will remain the same.

For the G-AIRMET USWX XML product (LWHE00 KKCI), an additional turbulence
category element would be added to differentiate between turbulence areas
containing mountain wave activity and those that do not:

```
<turbCategory  
xlink:href="http://codes.nws.noaa.gov/NWSI-10-  
811/TurbulenceCategory" xlink:title="MTNWAVE"/>
```

```
<turbCategory  
xlink:href="http://codes.nws.noaa.gov/NWSI-10-  
811/TurbulenceCategory" xlink:title="NON-SPECIFIC"/>
```

For the G-AIRMET BUFR Message (JUHE00 KKCI), the meteorological feature
descriptor (0-08-011) will now be set to a value of 23 (Mountain Wave)
for the areas flagged as being associated with Mountain Wave Activity,

but remain at 13 (Turbulence) for those areas not associated with Mountain Wave Activity.

This enhancement is intended to satisfy a National Transportation Safety Board recommendation. The recommendation advised the NWS to provide a primary aviation weather product that specifically addresses both the potential for and the existence of mountain wave activity and its associated aviation weather hazards.

For questions regarding this Service Change Notice, please contact:

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