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Public Information Statement, Comment Request
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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From: Robert Rutledge, Acting Chief
 Aviation Services Branch

Subject: Soliciting Comments by March 20, 2015, on the Experimental
Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) Tool

NWS is seeking comments on its experimental Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) Tool. HEMS can overlay multiple fields of interest: ceiling, visibility, flight category, winds, relative humidity, temperature, icing, satellite, radar (base and composite reflectivity), graphical AIRman's METeorological Information (G-AIRMETs), Significant Meteorological Information (SIGMETs), Meteorological Terminal Air Reports (METARs), Terminal Aerodrome Forecasts (TAFs) and pilot reports (PIREPs). Overlays include navigational aids, airports and heliports for the entire United States. More detail is revealed as you zoom in and individual layers can be turned on or off independently. The tool is not a weather product; it is a display that aggregates a number of existing weather products into a single, quick-glance, automated graphic. All underlying products have already gone through a safety risk management process.

HEMS flights represent commercial aviation activity performed by Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certificated air carrier operators; therefore, operations must have the highest level of safety. Per requirement of the FAA, the Aviation Digital Display Site (ADDS) development team created a tool specifically designed to show weather conditions for short-distance and low-altitude flights that are common for the HEMS community. By using a highly interactive and intuitive tool that focuses on small, localized regions, HEMS operators gain critical weather awareness to make their flights safer for crews and patients.

A graphic of the HEMS tool front page is online at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/aviation/images/hems.png>

The HEMS Tool will be continuously updated and available online at:

<http://testbed.aviationweather.gov/hemst>

Comments will be collected through March 20, 2015 via the online survey linked below:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=HEMS-Tool> or via comments provided to ncep.awc.avwx@noaa.gov.

For further information, please contact:

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National Public Information Statements are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification/archive>

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