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Service Change Notice 18-94
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
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From: Allison Allen, Chief
 NWS Marine, Tropical and Tsunami Services Branch

Subject: Changes to Valid Time Event Codes (VTEC) and Event Tracking Numbers (ETNs) for Domestic Tsunami Test Products: Effective April 1, 2019

Effective April 1, 2019, at 0000 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), NWS will implement modifications described below to the format of tsunami test products. The proposed modifications are intended to eliminate the possibility that test products are improperly or accidentally disseminated as operational products for real-world events. These changes do not apply to international products.

The following changes to VTEC and ETN codes for domestic tsunami test messages are:

Proposed Test Message Modifications:

VTEC codes for test messages start with the /T fixed identifier (versus /O for operational messages). To provide additional assurance that a test message is not inadvertently distributed as an actual Warning/Advisory/Watch product, ETNs for test messages will begin with 9 as the leading digit of the four character code, beginning with 9001. For example: /T.NEW.PAAQ.TS.W.9013.100726T0202Z-000000T0000Z/: the sequential TWC test message would have an ETN number in the 9000 series as shown in this example.

VTEC codes and their associated Universal Geographic Code (UGC) character strings will follow the communications header codes, World Meteorological Organization (WMO) header, and the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) identifier near the top of the product so tsunami alerts will be consistent with all other NWS alert products.

These changes will be incorporated into the Tsunami Warning Center Operations Directive 10-701, as well as new tsunami-specific sections in the Text Product Formats and Codes Directive 10-1701, the UGC Directive 10-1702, and the VTEC Directive 10-1703 when these instructions are updated on their regular cycle. Changes to TWC product generation software will also be implemented to affect these changes.

For questions or feedback regarding this notice, please contact:

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