

NOUS41 KWBC 311505  
PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 20-35  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
1105 AM EDT Tue Mar 31 2020

TO:           Subscribers:  
              -NOAA Weather Wire Service  
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              Other NWS partners and NWS employees

FROM:         Bruce Entwistle  
              Chief, Aviation and Space Weather Services Branch

SUBJECT:      Operational Implementation of the Helicopter Emergency  
              Medical Services (HEMS) Tool Enhancements Effective  
              March 31, 2020

Effective March 31, 2020, at 1900 Universal Coordinated Time (UTC), enhancements to the HEMS tool, produced by the NWS Aviation Weather Center (AWC), will transition to operational status.

The HEMS tool, developed at the request of the Federal Aviation Administration, is a display that aggregates a number of existing weather products into a single, quick-glance, automated graphic.

The tool 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 Aviation Routine Weather Reports (METARs), Terminal Aerodrome Forecasts (TAFs), and Pilot Reports (PIREPs).

Additional overlays include navigational aids, airports and heliports for the entire United States. A zoom feature reveals more detailed information, and individual layers can be turned on or off independently.

This tool has found a much broader audience including helicopter operations to oil rigs, forest fire operations, drones and crop dusting. Low altitude operations are extremely sensitive to

changing and/or adverse weather conditions and need weather information presented quickly and effectively for pilots who may not be weather experts.

Further enhancements to the HEMS tool include updates to the ceiling and visibility analysis product to greater data resolution and adding hourly gridded ceiling and visibility forecasts out to 6 hours.

The HEMS tool is available at:  
<https://www.aviationweather.gov/hemst>

The Product Description Document can be found at:  
[https://nws.weather.gov/products/PDD/PDD\\_OplHEMSTool\\_2020.pdf](https://nws.weather.gov/products/PDD/PDD_OplHEMSTool_2020.pdf)

For questions regarding the HEMS tool, please contact:

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NWS Service Change Notices are online at:  
<https://www.weather.gov/notification/>

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