

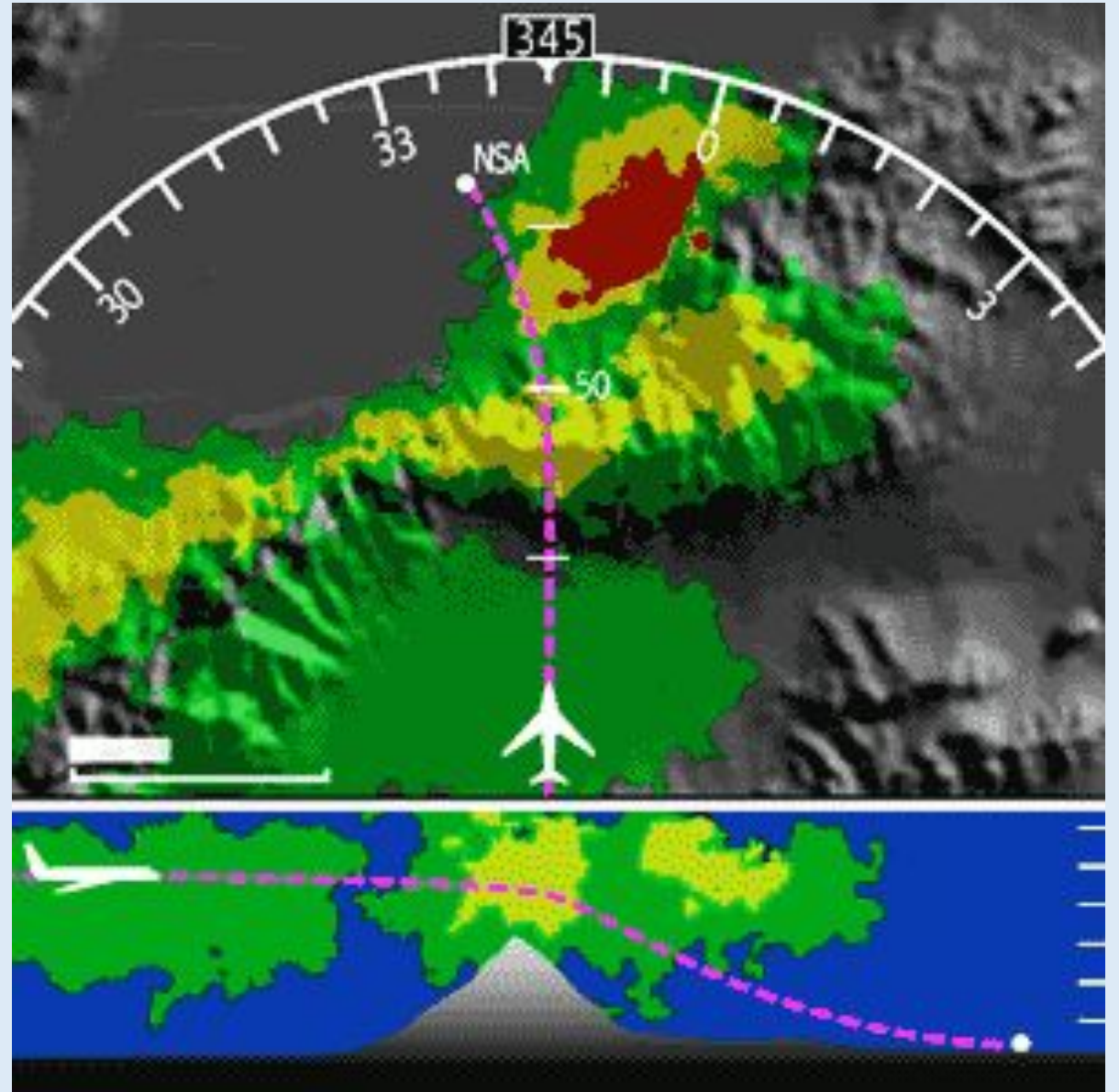
# Hot Topics in the NWS Aviation Program

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# Hot Topics

- CWSU Staffing Issues
- Latest with Digital Aviation Services
- Smoke Aloft in the TAF

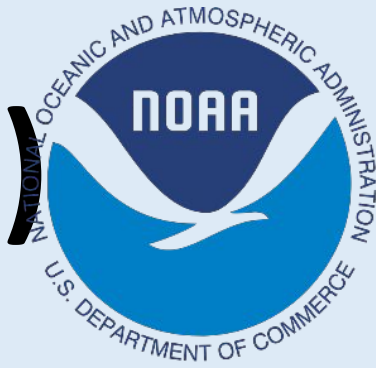


# Center Weather Service Unit (CWSU) Staffing Issues



- One vacancy is 25% of the office staffing; 2 vacancies at once becoming more common
  - Office hours: 16/day; 7 days per week
- GS 5-12 program has possibly limited applicants; might be getting better?
- Pay grade does not match responsibility
  - Work alone
  - Constant on site DSS
- TDY volunteers for short staffing situations are limited
  - Responsible WFOs need to take the lead

# Digital Aviation Services (DAS)



Latest Information – Fall 2021

- MSD Chief's put a pause on future DAS development the Fall of 2020
  - There were several concerns:
    - Consistency and Common Starting Point (First Guess), Formatter, FAA Requirements, etc
- Two National Teams were formed
  - Guidelines, Consistency and Collaboration: RAMs, AWC and HQ – Lead: Cammye Sims
    - Proposal has been through Regional and National Management Review
    - Sent to NWSEO recently
    - Only CONUS WFOs: what grids will be produced and derived, how often and resolution
  - TAF Formatter: Field and a few RAMs and HQ – Lead: Melissa DiSpigna
    - National AFP call being planned with formatter developer (former)
    - 2 Subgroups: (1) Define a common starting point for routine TAF issuances; (2) Find and consolidate tools to a baseline populate with regional/microclimate needs considered
- Later in 2022 - Next Steps:
  - Experimental DAS graphics will be reviewed by select partners in Southern and Western Regions

# Smoke Aloft in the TAF



- Smoke aloft has been an issue for aviation for several years
  - May or may not be in the METAR
  - Less questions and problems with surface visibility (less than 6 miles)
- Sky cover is the expected amount of opaque clouds or other opaque phenomena that might be aloft such as elevated smoke layers from wildfires or volcanic ash (in percent) covering the sky valid for the top of the indicated hour.
  - For those areas where there are dense smoke layers and the sun is obscured, it is okay for this to be considered cloud cover and a CIG in the TAF.
  - For those areas where smoke is partially obscuring the sun, the recommendation for the TAF would be to keep the coverage low such as SCT or FEW (no CIG).
  - Forecaster discretion for remote locations
- Collaborate with the CWSU on smoke impacts to air traffic (slantwise VIS and PIREPs)
- Include information in the Aviation Section of the AFD



# Discussion/Questions

