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Service Change Notice 17-15
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
850 AM EST Tue Feb 14 2017

To: Subscribers:
 -NOAA Weather Wire Service
 -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
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 Other NWS partners and NWS employees

FROM: William Bauman
 Chief, Aviation and Space Weather Services Branch

SUBJECT: Changes to the Automated Surface Observing System
 (ASOS) Augmentation and Backup Responsibilities in
 Alaska and Pacific Regions on March 15, 2017

NWS is working through a formal agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to transition ASOS augmentation and backup responsibilities in Alaska and Pacific Regions. Included in this transition is the discontinuation of any and all NWS backup of Service Level D airports. Per FAA regulations (FAA JO 7900.5C), there is no requirement for augmentation and backup of ASOS at Service Level D locations.

The NWS Offices in the Alaska Region and some offices in the Pacific Region currently augment and backup observations for ASOS units, per an FAA-NWS Memorandum of Understanding, dated September 2002. At the end of 2014, the FAA assumed general oversight of the aviation surface observation program and moved the entire CONUS aviation weather surface observing program under FAA policies. The remaining NWS locations that have yet to transition to FAA oversight are in the NWS Alaska and Pacific Regions. Once this transition is complete, all U.S. observing will fall under FAA policy and regulations.

The proposed timeline below may change slightly, but the NWS wants to ensure air carriers have advanced notice so they can become familiar with the Non-Federal Weather Observation (NF-OBS) Program. The NF-OBS Program is a voluntary program for non-Federal entities to provide or augment weather observation services addressed in FAA Order JO 7900.5C.

Additionally, Order JO 7210.77 has been created to provide guidance for NF-OBS weather observing procedures and practices. Non-federal entities, such as fixed-base operators, airports, state and local governments, and private businesses (NF-OBS Sponsors) provide the resources necessary to ensure the performance of this aviation service. Follow the link below for the complete order (JO 7210.77) issued December 19 2016.

https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Order/JO_7210.77_Signed.pdf

Timeline of proposed changes and transition of services to the FAA:

NWS immediately cease any augmentation and backup for Annette Alaska which has no service level.

March 15, 2017, NWS cease augmentation at all Service Level D airports in NWS Alaska and Pacific Regions, and FAA assumes responsibility during FAA facility operating hours at Barrow, Cold Bay, and McGrath. Service Level D locations include:

Alaska: Barrow, Cold Bay, McGrath, St. Paul and Yakutat.

Pacific: Hilo and Lihue, between the hours of 2200 to 2400 HST, when they revert to Service Level D

On June 1 2017, NWS will cease augmentation at the following sites and the FAA will assume responsibility during FAA facility operating hours:

Pacific Region: Hilo, Lihue, Guam, which are Service Level C sites.

Alaska: Service Level A: Bethel

Service Level B: King Salmon, Kodiak, Kotzebue, Nome

Below is a chart summarizing the changes in coverage as the FAA takes over the ASOS augmentation:

Location	Current FAA Hours (AKST)	Current NWS Hours (AKST)	Potential Gap (when NWS stops augmenting)
Bethel	1600-0000	0100-1700	0000-1600
King Salmon	1600-0000	0100-1700	0000-1600
Kodiak	N/A	0100-1700	0000-2359
Kotzebue	0700-2400	0000-0700	0000-0700
Nome	0700-2300	0000-0700	2300-0700

This change was previously announced in a Public Information Statement:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/notification/pns17-02arprasosbackuptransfer.htm>

If you have comments or questions, please contact:

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National public information statements are online:

<http://www.weather.gov/os/notif.htm>

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