

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
PRODUCT/SERVICE DESCRIPTION DOCUMENT (PDD)  
TYPE: Experimental Product  
DATE: January 10, 2003***

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GRAPHICAL AREA FRECAST (GFA)

**Part 1 - Mission Connection**

**1. Product/Service Description:**

The Graphical Area Forecast (GFA) product is an experimental graphical representation of the current operational production of aviation area forecasts, which provide an overview of weather conditions which could impact aviation operations. Therefore the GFA serves as a flight planning and weather briefing aid for general aviation pilots, and civil and military aviation operations. The experimental version described in this document covers only the northern Gulf of Mexico and the southern Gulf states. The GFA includes ceiling, visibility, icing, freezing levels, turbulence, surface winds, and low level wind shear for 3 to 6 hour time periods (only out 12 hours for this experiment) refreshed every 3 hours.

**2. Purpose/Intended Use:**

Consistent with National Weather Service intent to graphically represent aviation products currently only available in text formats, this experimental GFA will be produced and made available for review for the period of January 13th through February 14th, 2003, after which experimental production will cease. Operational production is not estimated to occur until early 2004.

There are several goals associated with this limited production test. 1) Determine the workload associated with the production of the GFA; 2) Determine additional software requirements needed to optimize GFA production; 3) Receive input from various end-users on the utility of the product and whether the information contained therein would satisfy flight planning needs to the point of reducing existing text products produced by NWS, such as the text area forecast and the Transcribed Weather Enroute Broadcast (TWEB) product; 4) Federal Aviation Administration will review for regulatory approval.

**3. Audience:**

Primarily intended for end-users directly related to aviation, including pilots and personnel who provide weather information to pilots.

**4. Presentation Format:**

Graphic - base map with choice of overlays and forecast periods. Distributed only through internet display means for this experimental period.

**5. Feedback Method:**

Feedback may be directed via e-mail to [GFAfeedback@comcast.net](mailto:GFAfeedback@comcast.net).

Technical comments for the Graphical Area Forecast may be addressed to:

National Weather Service Headquarters  
Attn: Aviation Services Branch, OS23  
1325 E-W Highway, SSMC2  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

or e-mail comments to: Mark.Andrews@noaa.gov

## Part 2 - Technical

### 1. **Format and Science Basis:**

An example of this product can be found at:

<http://aviationweather.gov/gfax/>.

Only the following parameters will be available for the experimental GFA test: Cloud Ceilings, Visibility, Icing, Freezing Levels, Turbulence, Low Level Wind Shear, and Surface Winds. Additional parameters are envisioned for operational production in 2004.

### 2. **Availability:**

The GFA is available 18 hours/day Monday through Friday on the Aviation Weather Center WEB site.

### 3. **Additional Information:** N/A