

Introduction to TAFB: Duties, Forecasts, and Products



Scott Stripling, TAFB Scott.Stripling@noaa.gov

<u>Iropical Analysis and</u> <u>Forecast Branch (TAFB)</u>

Year round (24/7/365) products

- Marine forecasts (graphical and text) and discussions (MIM)
- Surface analyses and discussions (TWD)
- Aviation forecasts and warnings (backup responsibilities) ***
- Satellite-derived rainfall estimates
- Hurricane Season
 - Tropical cyclone intensity estimates using Dvorak technique
 - Media support to NHC (English, Spanish, French)
 - Radar tracking of tropical cyclones
 - Forecast support to Hurricane Specialists (Marine)



~ 14 million sq. nautical miles

TAFB Forecast Desks





TAFB Forecast Duties



Marine Forecast Products

Northeast Pacific High Seas Forecast (FZPN03 KNHC)

Tropical Cyclone Wave Height Estimates

Meteorological Discussion East Pacific Tropical Weather Discussion (AXPZ20 KNHC)

Satellite Products Dvorak Tropical Cyclone Satellite Intensity Estimates Microwave Satellite Position Estimates Objective Dvorak Satellite Intensity Estimates Satellite Rainfall Estimates <u>Graphical Products</u> Sea State Analysis Wind & Wave Forecasts Wave Period Forecasts Surface Prog. Forecasts High Wind Graphic TC Danger Area Graphic

TAFB Forecast Duties

Marine Forecast Products Atlantic High Seas Forecast (FZNT02 KNHC) Gulf of Mexico Offshore Waters Forecast (FZNT24 KNHC) Caribbean/Atlantic Offshore Waters Forecast (FZNT23 KNHC) NAVTEX Forecasts (3) (FZNT25 KNHC, FZNT26 KNHC, & FZNT27 KNHC)



<u>Graphical Products</u> Sea State Analysis Wind & Wave Forecasts Wave Period Forecasts Surface Prog. Forecasts

Meteorological Discussion Marine Weather Discussion (AGXX40 KNHC)

TAFB Forecast Duties

<u>Surface Analysis</u> 6-hourly for area from 20S to 30N between 10E and 140W 3-hourly mainly for Gulf of Mexico, Florida, Mexico,



Pan-American Temperature/Precipitation Table

Meteorological Discussion Atlantic Tropical Weather Discussion <u>Graphical Forecast Products</u> Surface Prog. Forecasts

Additional TAFB Duties

TAFB Staffs "4th" Desk between August 1- October 20. Relieves other 3 desks during the busy peak of the hurricane season.

Back-Up Responsibilities •OPC's Atlantic High Seas & Offshore Forecasts •Honolulu S. Pacific HSF & Satellite Products •Aviation Products over Caribbean & Gulf of Mexico (FACA & SIGMETS)



Additional TAFB Duties



Dvorak Classifications

DEAN 21 August 0615 UTC

FELIX 4 September 1145 UTC





T 7.0/7.0 140 KT 921 MB RECON 8/21/0605 UTC 156 KT (FLV) – 140 KT 909 MB T 7.0/7.0 140 KT 921 MB RECON 9/04/0702 UTC 148 KT (FLV) – 133 KT 939 MB

Dvorak Classifications (Intensity & Position Estimates)



Microwave Fixes began in 2004

Surface Analysis and Tropical Weather Discussions

Unified Surface Analysis



TWD Areas of Responsibility

North Atlantic

Includes: Mexico, Central America, northern South America, Florida/SE US, Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, North Atlantic to the African coast, and coastal west Africa





• East Pacific

Includes west coastal areas of Mexico, Central America, and northern South America

What is the Tropical Weather Discussion (TWD)?

Plain language narrative text product describing:

- Major synoptic scale features and significant areas of disturbed weather
- Short-term trends and forecasts (up to ~48 hours)
- Meteorological reasoning for current features/weather and trends/forecasts
- Model performance; degree of confidence in forecast
- Two separate products cover tropical North Atlantic and eastern North Pacific Oceans, and adjacent land areas
- Provides tropical weather information to those who need to know the current state of the atmosphere and expected trends

General TWD Format

- Special Features
 - Tropical and Subtropical Cyclone
 - Significant feature that has the possibility of developing into a TC.
- Tropical Waves
- IICZ
- Discussion- Areas can change with weather pattern
 - Gulf of Mexico
 - Caribbean
 - Western and Central Atlantic
 - Eastern Atlantic

Special Features Section

- Overall structure or appearance of system
- Indicate future intensity changes following current TC forecast
- Discuss associated middle/upper level features and convection

Tropical Waves Section

- Discuss from east to west
- Summarize strength, position (including level of uncertainty), and movement, including reference to familiar geographic locations
- Provide reasons for positioning (wind shifts in timesections, pressure falls, features in satellite Hovmoeller diagrams, etc.)
- Indicate associated convection, other impacts

Data and Tools Needed to <u>Construct a TWD</u>

- Climatological knowledge and/or data
- Recent:
 - TAFB surface analyses
 - Surface and upper air observations
 - Geostationary infrared, water vapor, and visible imagery
 - Satellite-derived winds (e.g., QuikSCAT, GOES cloud- and water vapor-tracked winds)
 - Radar observations
 - Lightning Data
- Latest model analyses and forecasts
- (Tropical) Meteorological knowledge and analysis techniques

Water Vapor Image Interpretation: Locate Mid/Upper Level Features



040622/0545 GOES-12 WV-CH03

Water Vapor Image Interpretation: Satellite-Derived Wind Vectors



040622/0545 GOES-12 WV-CH0:

Relating Surface and Mid/Upper Levels

Example of reasoning for tropical wave position/placement

E CARIBBEAN TROPICAL WAVE LOCATED ALONG 63W S OF 19N MOVING WEST 15-20 KT. THE CAYENNE VERTICAL SOUNDING SHOWS A WEAK WAVE GENERALLY ABOVE PASSAGE 900 SOMETIME ON. THE 21 JUN. MB FARLY EXTRAPOLATION WOULD PLACE THE WAVE VICINITY OF THIS THE LESSER ANTTLLES THE CONVECTIVE PATTERN DISORGANIZED DUE LOW OVER HISPANIOLA AND TO STRONG VERTICAL SHEAR E OF AN UPPER STILL LAGGING WINDWARD ISLANDS MOST OF ARF SF OF THE THE CONVECTION FROM 7N-14N BETWEEN 54W-64W SCATTERED MODERATE MOVING WINDWARD ISLANDS AND NE VENEZUELA. TOWARDS HF.



Identifying Tropical Waves



- G. Berry
- C.Thorncroft
- A. Levine
- A. Penny

TAFB Mairine Forecasts



Marine forecasting timeline 1988-2000

- June 1988 Tropical Satellite Analysis and Forecast (TSAF) Branch acquires High Seas responsibility from – WFO San Francisco (HSFEP2)
 - WFO Miami (HSFAT2)
- March 1993 TSAF acquires High Seas responsibility for METAREA XVI – Peru (HSFEP3)
- June 1995 TSAF becomes TAFB
- June 2000 TAFB acquires the Offshore waters forecast responsibility from
 - WFO Miami (OFFNT3)
 - WFO New Orleans/Slidell (OFFNT4)

Marine forecasting timeline 2001-2012

- July 2001 TAFB added new offshore waters forecast zone to cover the Tropical North Atlantic east of the Windward/Leeward Islands
- May-Oct 2010 TAFB provides enhanced decision support services (EDSS) in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill
 - Experimental gridded marine forecasts
 http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/tafb/gridded_marine/index.php
 Experimental Graphicasts
 - http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutgraphicast.shtml

Marine Observation Systems: Available Tools

- Coastal-Marine Automated Network (C-MAN)
- Buoys (moored and drifting)
- Volunteer Observing Ship (VOS)
- Satellite Derived Products





Satellite Data Sources

- WINDSAT 25 km
- ASCAT 50/25 km
- OSCAT 50 km
- SSM/I (wind speed only)
- Satellite-derived winds (low-level cloud drift wind speed and direction)
- Altimeters: Jason I & II and Envisat (wave height only)
- TRMM (wind speed only)



Enhanced Sea State Analysis



Sandy 28 Oct 2012 ~0600Z

25 KM ASCAT Winds



NWP Model Guidance

- GFS Traditionally primary model for NWS/TAFB forecasters -24 km
- GFS Ensemble Probability of 20 and 34 kt winds, mean MSLP, "spaghetti" high/low plots.
- NAM/SREF limited domain problem for TAFB's large Area of Responsibility
- Other Global Models
 - NAVGEM
 - UKMET
 - ECMWF
 - CMC





NWP Wave Model Guidance

- NOAA Wavewatch III (GFS based wind field)
 - Regional scale (WNA/ENP)
 - GFDL version (NAH)
 - Multi-Grid (Resolutions)
- FNMOC Wave (NAVGEM based wind field)
- UKMET Wave
- ECMWF Wave
- WW3-FNMOC Ensemble
- WW3 Ensemble







Pacific

- Cold Fronts
- NE Trades
- Funneling "Gap" winds
 - Gulf of Tehuantepec
 - Gulf of Fonseca/Papagayo
 - Gulf of Panama
 - Sea of Cortez
 - Baja California

<u>Atlantic</u>

- Gales in Gulf of Mexico/SW North Atlantic in Winter
- Shelf water effect in NW Gulf of Mexico in winter
- Persistent Easterly Trades
- Funneling winds
 - Yucatan Channel
 - Florida Straits
 - Caribbean Passages
 - SW Caribbean within 60-120 NM of Colombian coast

High Seas Forecasts

High Seas Forecast includes synopsis of **primary** weather features and 24 and 48 hour forecasts

- High Seas Forecasts only include winds 20 kt or greater and/or seas 8 ft or higher
- Significant Convection and Areas of Fog and Visibilities < 3 NM

Average Monthly Percentage of TAFB High Seas Forecasts with Warnings* (Atlantic and East Pacific)

Percentage of TAFB High Seas Forecasts with Warnings Both Basins Combined 2004-2011



Extratropical (Gale, Storm and Hurricane Force)
Tropical (Tropical Storm and Hurricane)

Offshore Waters Forecasts

- Offshore Forecasts are 5-day forecasts geared toward recreational and smaller fishing vessels, which may spend a few days at sea
- Offshore Forecasts are broken into smaller zones
- Offshore forecasts are a more detailed forecast than the High Seas, as <u>ALL</u> winds and seas are forecast out to 5 days.
- Light winds may be stated as "5 to 10 kt", seas are forecast down to 1 foot.
- Offshore forecasts are period rather than event driven

Current Atlantic OFF zones



000 FZNT23 KNHC 270911 OFFNT3

Offshore Waters Forecast for the SW and Tropical N Atlantic and Caribbean Sea NWS National Hurricane Center Miami, FL 411 AM EST Tue Feb 27 2018

Offshore Waters Forecast for the Tropical N Atlantic from 07N to 22N between 55W and 64W, the SW N Atlantic S of 31N W of 65W including Bahamas, and the Caribbean Sea.

Seas given as significant wave height, which is the average height of the highest 1/3 of the waves. Individual waves may be more than twice the significant wave height.

AMZ001-272115-

Synopsis for Caribbean Sea and Tropical N Atlantic from 07N to 19N between 55W and 64W 411 AM EST Tue Feb 27 2018

.SYNOPSIS...Winds will pulse to strong at night along the coast of Colombia throughout the period. Similar winds will pulse in the Windward passage, and along the SE coast of Hispaniola through Wed night. Large swell will cross the tropical Atlc zones Wed night through Fri night. A more significant swell event will affect the Atlc Passages E of 69W by late Sat.

\$\$

AMZ011-272115-Caribbean N of 18N W of 85W including Yucatan Basin-411 AM EST Tue Feb 27 2018

.TODAY...NE to E winds 10 to 15 kt. Seas 3 to 5 ft. .TONIGHT...E winds 10 to 15 kt. Seas 3 to 5 ft. .WED...E to SE winds 10 to 15 kt. Seas 3 to 5 ft. .WED NIGHT...E to SE winds 10 to 15 kt. Seas 3 to 5 ft. .THU...SE winds 10 to 15 kt. Seas 3 to 5 ft. .THU NIGHT...E to SE winds 10 to 15 kt. Seas 3 to 5 ft. .FRI...E to SE winds 10 to 15 kt. Seas 3 to 5 ft. .FRI NIGHT...NE to E winds 5 to 10 kt. Seas 2 to 4 ft. .SAT...NE to E winds 10 to 15 kt. Seas 3 to 5 ft.

Marine Weather Discussion Manimats (AGXX40 KNHC)

- Issued Twice Daily between 1:00-2:30 AM/PM
- Sections of Product
 - Synopsis and Forecast Discussion
 - Current Warnings (Gale, Storm, T.C.)
- Discussion Area
 - Gulf of Mexico
 - Caribbean Sea
 - Southwest N Atlantic S of 31N W of 55W
- Synopsis/Discussion
 - Major synoptic scale features influencing Offshore Waters area
 - Significant/relevant surface/ship/buoy observations
 - SSMI/QuikSCAT Observations
 - Performance of models (GFS, NOGAPS, NWW3) with current forecast scenarios

Marine Weather Discussion Coordination Tool

MARINE WEATHER DISCUSSION NWS TPC/NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER MIAMI FL 135 AM EST MON FEB 12 2007

MARINE WEATHER DISCUSSION FOR GULF OF MEXICO...CARIBBEAN SEA AND SOUTHWEST NORTH ATLC S OF 31N W OF 55W.

	GULF OF MEXICOINCREA	SING SE RETURN FLOW EVIDEN	T ACROSS THE NW GULF WITH	I SEVERAL PLATFORMS RE	PORTING 20 KT
	WINDS. ELSEWHERE CON	DITIONS ARE RATHER TRANQUI	L. SFC TROUGH ACROSS THE I	FLORIDA STRAITS APPEAR	S TO BE LIFTING
	NWD IN ADVANCE OF AN U	PPER LEVEL SHORTWAVETROU	GH OVER THE CNTRL GULF. G	FS HINTS AT SFC LOW DEV	/ELOPMENT
YNOPTIC	WHICH MAY BE A RESULT	OF CONVECTIVE FEEDBACK IN T	HE MODEL. FOR NOW WILL NO	OT INDICATE A SFC LOW. IN	
	THE ONLY NET EFFECT WI	LL BE A WIND SHIFT AS THIS FEA	ATURE PASSES OFF TO THE NE	E EARLY TUE. MOST SIGNIE	ICANT CHANGE
PATTERN	IS THE ARRIVAL OF A COL	D FRONT OVER THE FAR NW TUE	E WHICH SWEEPS RAPIDLY SEV	WD AND EXTENDS FROM C	ENTRAL FLORIDA
	TO THE BAY OF CAMPECH	E BY EARLY WED AND SE OF TH	E AREA BY THU. A SECONDAR	Y SURGE OF COLD AIR EN	SUES THU WITH
	AN INCREASE IN NLY WIND	S ACROSS MOST OF THE GULF	W OF 90W. WINDS GRADUALL	Y DECREASE FRI. ALTHOU	GH THE
	OPERATIONAL RUN OF TH	E GFS HINTS AT GALES IN THE S	W GULFTHE ENSEMBLE MEA	IN PROBABILITIES ARE ON	LY IN THE
	30-40 PCT RANGE SO WILL	NOT MENTION GALES AT THIS 7		S 25-30 KT WITH HIGHER G	USTS THU INTO
MODEL	FRI FOR THIS AREA.				
		K OUASL STATIONARY FRONT EN			
NECOSEION	OF THE EPONT RECOMING				
	WILL BE THE FOCUS FOR S	SECTOW DEVELOPMENT ON THE	AHEAD OF A MORE SIGNIFICA	ANT SYSTEM WED AND THI	I GIVEN THE
	CONVECTIVE FEEDBACK	SSUES WITH THE GES COUPLED	WITH THE FACT THAT THIS SO	LUTION IS SHARED ONLY	WITH THE LOWER
	RESOLUTION NOGAPSWI	I I NOT INDICATE A SEC I OW AT	THIS TIME BUT RATHER MOVE	THE WARM FRONT NWD	W OF 70W LATE
	TUE INTO WED. THE HIGHE	R RESOLUTION ECMWF/UKMET	DO NOT INDICATE A SFC LOW.	SECONDARY CYCLOGENE	SIS OFF THE
EXTENDED	NC/MID ATLC COAST ON W	ED ENSURES BROAD FETCH OF	INCREASING SWLY WINDS N C	F 25N WITH WINDS 20-30 K	T. ALL THE RELIABLE
OUTLOOK	MODELS HAVE BEEN TRENDING FURTHER N WITH THE SECONDARY CYCLOGENESIS AND THUS LESSENING THE CHANCES FOR GALES OVER THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE FCST AREA LATE WED AND THU BEHIND A STRONG COLD FRONT. ENSEMBLE PROBABILITIES				
2 5 DAVS					
3-9 DATS	HAVE ALSO TRENDED LOV	VER AS WELL TO 20-30 PCT. THE	COLD FRONT ENTERS THE FA	R NW PORTION OF THE AR	EA WED AND
	EXTENDS FROM 30N70W T	O S FLORIDA BY WED EVENING A	ND FROM 28N65W TO THE FLO	ORIDA STRAITS BY THU EV	ENING. A
	SECONDARY SURGE OF CO	OLD AIR ARRIVES FRI AND INCRE	EASES NWLY WINDS TO 20-30 P	KT OVER MOST AREAS N O	F 25N.
	WADNINGS				
	WARNINGS				
WARNINGS	ATEANTICNONE.				
	CARIBBEAN NONE				
	GULF OF MEXICO., NONE.				

Suite of Marine Radiofax Charts Produced by TAFB



1-2-3 Rule for Hurricane Avoidance

Diagram of the 1-2-3 Rule

The danger area to avoid is the area inscribed by the connecting tangent lines of the outer most radius of 34 knot winds plus a safety margin derived from the ten year average Atlantic tropical cyclone position errors at the 24, 48, and 72 hour forecast positions. Adding 100 NM at 24 hour forecast, 200 NM at 48 our forecast, and 300 NM at the 72 hour forecast positions.



Are NHC Forecasts Getting Better?



NHC Forecast Skill



Atlantic Tropical Cyclone Danger Area Graphic



Areas of Possible Tropical Cyclone Formation are Depicted.

TAFB New Products/Services 2010 - 2012

- June 2010 Gridded forecasts of 10-m winds, MSLP, SIG wave heights, Primary swell period, direction & height
- Aug 2010 Daily Graphicast to provide Enhanced Decision Support Services (EDDS)
- May 2011 Introduction of Monsoon troughs and shear lines on surface analysis
- June 2011 Experimental Satellite Rainfall Product

TAFB New Products/Services 2010 - 2012

- Oct 2011 TAFB submitting request to change marine zones in the offshore waters to smaller zones to provide more detail
- Implementation 3 April 2012
- June 2012 Experimental Wind Speed Probability based TC Danger Graphic



CURRENT OFFSHORE WATERS ZONES

Offshore Waters Forecast Zones 3 April 2012



Gridded Sea State Analysis



In operational AWIPS data stream Oct 2010

Issued twice daily 0000 & 1200 UTC

Experimental Gridded marine forecasts



Internet URLs – New Offshore/Gridded Marine

NEW OFFSHORE ZONES http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/experimental/offshores/

GRIDDED MARINE http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/tafb/gridded_marine/

New NHC Rainfall Product: Prototype Text

TCCA22 KNHC 291843 STDECA

SATELLITE TROPICAL DISTURBANCE RAINFALL ESTIMATES NWS NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER MIAMI FL

2115 UTC TUE AUG 29 2009							
SYSTEM NAME	DATE/TIME	LOCATION					
T.S ANDRES	 29/1800 UTC	17.2N 102.30					
RAINFALL ESTIMATED BY SATELLITE VI QHORPH 24-HOUR RAINFALL MAXIMUM (FROM 18-18 UTC) - 235 MM AT 23.3N 99.2W 6-HOUR RAINFALL MAXIMUM (FROM 12-18 UTC) - 150 MM AT 24.2N 100.5W RAINFALL DISTRIBUTION IN MM OVER THE LAST 6-HOURS (FROM 12-18 UTC) LATITUDE. LONGITUDE							
26-27N 5-40 10-45 15-55 25-26N 15-45 20-70 35-85 24-25N 40-76 55-100 100-130 23-24N 20-50 45-70 70-90 22-23N 0-35 5-40 10-30	20-50 15-30 60-100 30-70 110-150 60-100 70-95 40-65 10-25 5-25	5- 20 20- 45 40- 75 15- 40 0- 10					
RAINFALL ESTIMATED BY SATELLITE VIA NRL-BLEND. 24-HOUR RAINFALL MAXIMUM (FROM 18-18 UTC)- 295 MM AT 23.3N 98.7W 6-HOUR RAINFALL MAXIMUM (FROM 12-18 UTC)- 125 MM AT 24.6N 100.2W RAINFALL DISTRIBUTION IN MM OVER THE LAST 6-HOURS (FROM 12-18 UTC)							
LATITUDE	CITUDE. 101W-100W 100W- 99W 10-45 5-25 20-50 10-30 65-100 25-70 110-125 60-100 70-95 35-70 10-30 5-25	99W- 98W 0- 20 5- 20 15- 45 35- 75 15- 40 0- 10					
RAINFALL HINDCAST FROM THE 062 [0FS MODEL]. 24-HOUR RAINFALL MAXIMUM (FROM 18-18 UTC)- 305 MM AT 23.1N 101.8W 6-HOUR RAINFALL MAXIMUM (FROM 12-18 UTC)- 130 MM AT 24.9N 101.9W RAINFALL DISTRIBUTION OVER THE LAST 6-HOURS (FROM 12-18 UTC) LATITUDE.							

Similar to old text product in format, with differences in content:

24-hour QPE from 3 methods

- Presented as a range of rainfall within a 1°x1° box
- Covers total area of 6°x6° centered near disturbance
- **Earth-relative coordinates** (i.e. no reference to "left-ofcenter"/"right of center")

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SATELLITE AND MODEL DERRIVED RAINFALL ESTIMATES INDICATE UNCERTAINTY IN THE AMOUNT OF RAIN RECEIVED RAINFALL MAY BE UNDERESTIMATED ON THE WINDWARD SIDE OF TERRAIN

70 - 85

10 - 30

70 - 95

10 - 25

40 - 70

5- 25

15 - 40

0 - 10

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT HTTP://WWW.HURRICANES.GOV/RAINFALL

45- 70

5-40

20- 45

5- 35

23-24N

22-23N

Wind Speed Probability Based Tropical Cyclone Danger Area Graphics



TAFB Plans 2012-15

- Sea State initialized in GFE using "optimum interpolation" techniques from NWP guidance/surface observations – Fall 2012 – Replaces Sea Grid
- Locally run WW JHT Project with NRL Winter 2012-13
- Work with MMAB on valued added WW 2013
- Enhanced marine products on the web Point and click forecasts (MFM, Zones)
- Enhanced Decision Support Services (Local high resolution grids)
- Enhanced Ecological Support Services (HAB, Oil Spill)
- Collaborate/expansion of gridded marine forecasts with International MET services

Contact TAFB

 Tel: 305-229-4425 (Pacific) 305-229-4424 (Atlantic) 305-229-4426 (Analyst) 305-229-4454 (Branch Chief)

? Questions – Comments ?

