

NATCA Safety & Tech Update Week of June 19, 2017

Airport Capacity Decision Support Tool (ADEST): Kristen Laubach represents the membership as the Article 114 Representative for ADEST. Her report is below.

There haven't been any significant changes with the Airport Capacity Decision Support Tool (ADEST). The team continues to work on the development of this project. While working on the design of ADEST, the programmers ran into some security issues and have been unable to push the program into staging in order for us to test the most recent updates. They anticipate this being resolved in the next couple weeks. There was also a problem with the NOTAMS page not updating in a timely fashion. A new hosting system has been identified and once implemented, this should resolve that issue.

WEATHER: Matt Tucker (ZTL) is NATCA's Article 114 Representative for Weather. His update for the membership is below.

Weather and Radar Processor (WARP)

The high confidence algorithm is being deployed as each center that decides to install it. The algorithm will greatly improve the current mosaic as it will remove most of the AP and other interference that is in the mosaic from the NEXRAD's. Some of this interference is from wind farms and this will remove most of the related interference. The biggest issue still outstanding for the WARP mosaic is the problem of aircraft deviating around weather that the controller is not displaying. When the new mosaic was designed the system went from an 8dbz detection threshold to a .5 dbz detection threshold so precipitation that does not break the 30dbz level will not display. This has been a problem in the higher altitudes' and because of the old detection threshold the system used to over report weather on the controller's display. There are a number of ideas being looked at, to include creating a light layer on ERAM. Other ideas include lowering the moderate dbz threshold only in the higher altitudes. This solution could cause more clutter in the higher altitudes.

NEXTGEN Weather Processor (NWP) and Common Support Services-Weather (CSS-WX)

Both systems are marching towards completion, there a number of contract modes that need to be completed. The two major modes cover training and number of requirement changes that include changes in products that will be available. The biggest challenge to the program right now is concerns over bandwidth. The current architecture exceeds the allocated bandwidth so

there are a number of ideas being floated to reduce the bandwidth requirements. Currently bandwidth will not impact the mosaics that will go to ATC scopes.

The human factors team meets with Raytheon and reviewed the current interface that has been designed and upcoming work that is being lined up. A number of issues were agreed to, like the outage notifications for NEXRAD's. Currently NEXRAD outages are not readily available to the controller at the sector and this system will show on the Aviation Weather Display and at some point, the individual NEXRAD outages will be available in ERAM. Filtering of weather data was a major discussion point during the meeting and it was determined that a TIM will be required to work the issue as it impacts a large number of products. These products include METAR's, PIREPS, and storm motion information as a sample of products that need to be filtered by zoom level on the display.

First article test hardware is being delivered to the Technical Center this month and the goal is to start early user evaluations in August as both systems will finally be talking to each other and providing a lot of the data that will be collected and shared across platforms. One of the challenging parts of this program is having two vendors providing different parts of the overall system and developing the systems with test data and not live interfaces. A number of the products require one system to run algorithms and the other system does the displaying of the data into a usable format. The technical centers systems will allow for the first-time integration of the systems with most interfaces being connected, this will give a chance to actually see and interact with the output of the systems so that validation of the weather products can actually commence.

Key site surveys start in July, the facilities are: ZTL, A80, ATL ATCT, PDK ATCT, ZLC, SLC ATCT, S56, and ZOA.

Offshore Precipitation Capability (OPC)

The program office is still moving forward. There have been a couple of issues that have come and they are being worked out. The need to bring engineering services and Tech Ops was realized when the need arose install large monitors at a couple of sites. ZNY and ZSU may have a delay waiting for these issues to be resolved. MIT/LL has received its hardware and has the new website up and running with an improved OPC running on it now. A global lightning contract was entered into allowing for a much-improved accuracy of the heavier weather returns. The goal is still to try turning ZHU, ZMA, and ATCSCC around June 29th. The briefing item for OPC will be coming out this week and it includes OPC being incorporated into position pre-brief

requirements and allows for generalized use of OPC information to be provided to aircrews.