

RACC Meeting Minutes No. 162 (11/16/05)

1. Purpose: A regularly scheduled meeting of the RACC was held from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. EST in Room 3246 on Wednesday, November 16, 2005, to discuss and address national and regional AWIPS issues, problems and concerns.
2. Regions In Attendance: The following regions (and other NWS organizations) participated in the conference call: **ERH**: Neal DiPasquale; **SRH**: Eric Howieson; **WRH**: Andy Edman, Craig Schmidt; **CRH**: Greg Noonan; **ARH**: Phil Mieczynski; **PRH**: Bill Ward; **GSD**: Rich Jesuroga; **NWSTC**: Randy Schupbach; **Warning Decision Training Branch**: Timm Decker,
3. Discussion Items: The following topics were discussed/briefed at the meeting:
 - a. Status of OB6 and Other Software Issues: We expected a few DRs for OB6 but now have upwards of nearly 50. A few weeks ago we had 32 in the list but have added more due to recent IFPS and NWRWAVES problems, among other things. The development organization is doing a lot of work in the pre-test phase of OB6. We will not deliver OB6 without these DRs fixed as we deem them very important fixes. We are expecting field deployment on or about January 30 but there is a risk of slipping this a bit if too many more DRs have to be deemed to be fixed.

One significant effect is the NEXRAD beta deployment which depends upon sites having OB6 and any delays past January 30 could have a significant inconvenience for them.

- b. Hardware Maintenance Process: Raytheon has assumed AWIPS site hardware maintenance. We are in the process of establishing the hardware maintenance support and dispatch process. Our objective is to be responsive, and provide effective, timely services to you, the customer/user. As we refine our process, we've been made aware that three sites have experienced site equipment maintenance repair times that did not meet your expectations, or Raytheon's. We have been notified that these sites experienced instances where the maintenance technician dispatched did not arrive at the site prepared to adequately support AWIPS and its users. We were notified via the NCF and are taking the following corrective actions: The process is for the technician to respond to a site call to diagnose the problem and arrive with spare parts and to make the repair the same day, whenever possible. The goal is to minimize the downtime to the site. The basic maintenance response time for critical items under contractor maintenance (e.g., servers, network equipment, communication equipment) is 5 days per week (Monday-Friday), 8 hours per day (site time) with a 4 hour response time. The Service Level Agreement is that the repair is to be completed the next day (earlier if possible). We are fully engaged and committed to meeting that SLA.

A meeting was held last week among the hardware maintenance contractor (GTSI/Prism Pointe) and NCF personnel to ensure that all parties are communicating effectively and that the site is contacted prior to a maintenance visit, kept abreast of status and changes in status, and that the maintenance call is coordinated with the NCF.

The deployment of the spares is ongoing and has been expedited by the hardware maintenance

contractor. Spares are all expected to be in the depots in approximately 1 week.

Raytheon is evaluating the technician database to identify those with AWIPS expertise as first choice for maintenance calls to field sites. We are making an effort to capture/retain field engineers that are familiar with NWS, AWIPS, and your sites to establish an effective maintenance support team. Sites are strongly encouraged to provide names/contacts of technicians that they have worked successfully with previously. We are continuing our evaluation and modification of field support procedures to make sure they meet your critical support needs, and mission requirements.

c. Winter PM Schedule for AWIPS Site Ground Station (SGS): Raytheon has been selected to provide and sustain AWIPS Operations and Maintenance. A component of the maintenance is the Fall AWIPS SGS maintenance.

Over the next few days, site technicians from Globecom Systems, the AWIPS Satellite Broadcast Network (SBN) provider, will be contacting your sites to schedule Fall preventative maintenance on your AWIPS SBN site receive system to include the deicer. This preventative maintenance should not interrupt receipt of SBN data, but will interrupt the NCF's ability to monitor your site's receive signal strength. Once on site, the Globecom technician will be notifying NCF that the maintenance is in progress and will confirm with the NCF that monitor and control capability has been restored before leaving the site. A schedule of the tentative dates for maintenance is enclosed.

Please note that if sites would like to recommend a local field service technician that they have worked with before, they can e-mail the Globecom maintenance manager, Luke Paternostro at lpaternostro@globecommsystems.com.

The Globecom technicians will work with each site to resolve any schedule conflicts that arise. We understand that some sites have been tentatively scheduled during the week of Thanksgiving. Scheduling factors beyond our control dictated this potential scheduling conflict. If you prefer to request that the preventative maintenance not be performed at your site during the holiday, please contact James Washington immediately. James will determine whether your site can be moved within the schedule or not. We apologize for any inconvenience this potentially could cause. However, we must start performing the SGS PM next week. If you have any questions or concerns please notify Andy Nappi, Raytheon, AWIPS Mission Assurance Manager at 703.295.1567 (Office), cell phone number 301.922.4675. You can also contact Randy Chambers at 301-713-0864 ext.161.

d. Focal Point/Participants Reports, Problems and Concerns:

Alaska Region: nothing significant to report.

Central Region: We recently had issues with the LSR program at site PAH. The WSH response is it is being worked on as an OB6 problem and is on the list of critical DRs for OB6. An ATAN has also been written and it will be tested at PAH and at ALY.

Eastern Region: Concerning the digital forecast and gridded data base, when a site goes into service backup, they have difficulty getting a full data backup. A trouble ticket concerning this problem has been written up.

Pacific Region: Kudos to Ashley Kells and Mike Rega of the SST at WSH for helping correct a WarnGen problem at Guam whereby the VTEC ETN number was not incrementing.

Southern Region: Now that WFOs are no longer using WWA and are using GFE/IFPS, who is supporting CRS formatters for products being sent to weather radio? NWRWAVES will not be out nationally until OB6 which is delayed and WWA formatters are no longer being used (Eric assumes). There are issues in the field and we need to know where the support is for CAFE or wbc4crs during this transition time before NWRWAVES. Will WSH be providing it? Will we continue to rely on people in the field? Will WSH be taking over NWRWAVES? If so, when? The WSH response is that many of these questions will be answered at several upcoming conference calls, one which is set for later today.

Western Region: nothing significant to report.

GSD: nothing significant to report.

NWSTC: nothing significant to report.

Warning Decision Training Branch: We are working on getting the Postgres working in the WES. We were able to create some warnings but had trouble with the polygons not showing up and are getting some blank spaces under some menus. We will cross reference these problems with the DR list and try to get it all corrected.

The next RACC is scheduled for Wednesday, November 30, 2005. If you know of any agenda items you wish to be discussed at this RACC, please e-mail them to Jim Stenpeck and cc Wayne Martin. This is to ensure that all of the appropriate WSH personnel attend this RACC to address your issues.