

RACC Meeting Minutes No. 226 (June 11, 2008)

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, June 11, 2008, to discuss and address national and regional AWIPS issues, problems and concerns.

2. Regions In Attendance: The following regions (and other NWS organizations outside of Silver Spring) participated in the conference call: **ERH**: Joshua Watson; **WRH**: Sheila Deiotte; **CRH**: Bill Gery, Greg Noonan; **ARH**: Joe Rubel; **PRH**: Bill Ward; **GSD**: Joanne Edwards; **Warning Decision Training Branch**: Mike Magsig, Shannon Key; **Forecast Decision Training Branch**: Shannon White;

3. Discussion Items: The following topics were discussed/briefed at the meeting:
 - a. Status of OB8.3 (Frank Lucadamo): The deployment begins on Monday, June 16. The NCF can handle up to 8 sites installing per day (Monday through Thursday). The mod note is ready to be signed by Friday, June 13, 2008. The updated documentation (System Manager's Manual) has been posted on all the site's AWIPS workstations. All the pre-requisites for installing OB8.3 will be included in the mod note. One item of note is that before a site installs OB8.3, all of their surrounding sites must have at least OB8.2.1.1 installed because of the issue with the ISC grids.

 - b. Status of Upcoming software Releases (Matt Kensey): Concerning OB8.3, all DVDs should arrive at all sites by the end of this week. A decision needs to be made whether the fix for DR 20218 (Super Res velocity/reflectivity product display problem within all-tilts) needs an Emergency Release request (as requested by the regions) or whether we can ATAN the workaround adding a menu item for Super Res all-tilts display. If we are allowed to proceed with the Emergency Release, a beta test could be scheduled for the first two weeks in July at both OB8.2 and OB8.3 sites. The schedule for OB9 and future releases would slip about a week. The Release Review for the Maintenance Release (OB8.3.1) is set for the end of July with a one week slip in deployment in September due to the national political conventions at the end of August and the beginning of September.

OB8.3.1: We are working to get together a candidate list of DRs. There were 2 DRs at the end of OB8.3 which we agreed to place in it and are reviewing a few more. We will begin the testing phase in the middle of July.

OB9: The PIT phase continues through June 30. Forecaster testing during the PIT phase is planned for June 17-20. Regular deployment is expected to begin around January 21, 2009.

 - c. Update on the Severe Weather Checklist (Wayne Martin): For the past couple of months the NWS and Raytheon has been examining reports that WarnGen and D2D occasionally run slowly during severe weather operations. This is being done under the authority of AWIPS Test Authorization Note 937 and the AWIPS sites participating in this testing are CHS, ICT, LSX, LZK, PAH, SGF and TAE.

On June 1, WFO CHS (Charleston, SC) reported a problem in which all of their workstations were running slowly during severe weather and the performance was so poor that CHS had to turn over their operations to their service backup provider, WFO ILM (Wilmington, NC). The performance at CHS improved dramatically when the NCF restarted the TextDB_Server process and during the post mortem analysis it was observed that the TextDB_Server was using a lot of memory, 2.1 Gigabytes of memory during the time that CHS was running slowly. Restarting the TextDB_Server decreased the TextDB_Server memory usage to 20 Megabytes and that is when the performance improved.

During the post mortem analysis, it was mentioned that the TextDB_Server has a memory leak and DR 20089 documents this problem. Mike Moss showed how over a 30 day period at CHS the TextDB_Server memory usage climbed from an initial usage of 27 Megabytes to 2.1 Gigabytes. We have updated ATAN 937 to test a version of the TextDB_Server that does not have the memory leak.

One mitigating action that CHS might have been able to do in order to prevent the WarnGen/D2D slowdown would have been to restart the TextDB_Server prior to severe weather so that they were starting with a clean slate. The instructions of doing this are in the Severe Weather Checklist so we are emphasizing the importance of running the Severe Weather Checklist prior to severe weather. The severe weather checklist can be found at:

<https://www.ops1.nws.noaa.gov/Secure/awipsnew/install/SvrWxHealthOB82.pdf>

Also, Wayne also mentioned that the regions all voted on upgrading the LDM software for the LDAD system. The target date is to be included in OB9. Wayne has submitted the baseline Request for Change and is optimistic that it will be approved.

d. Removal of TML Line from Hydro Products (Ashley Kells): Last year we added the Time Motion and Location (TML) line to WarnGen related products. Last summer we added the turn key script to all systems for the eventual turn off of the TML from all Hydro products and the stand-alone Marine Weather Statement. The original plan was to implement this before most sites received OB8.2. But, this change did not happen. We worked with OS this past spring as we wanted to use the turn key script in July. The products affected are the convective Flash Flood Warning (FFW), the convective Flash Flood Statement (FFS), the Areal Flood Advisory (FFS), the Areal Flood Warning (FLW), and the stand-alone Marine Weather Statement (MWS). These changes will be made over time likely in July. But, no exact date has been set.

e. Effects of OB8.3 on MatchObsAll Program (Shannon White): The new version of Python used in OB8.3 is much pickier about certain types of calls. Tim Barker from WFO BOI (Boise, ID) has informed us that there are all kinds of type errors with calls to the Smart Script routines which have always worked in the past. New versions of MatchObsAll and obsdump have been provided and should work for the routines that had caused the error messages.

There were questions about documentation. Since this is not in the baseline, it will not be documented in the mod note. It can be placed in the Smart Tools repository. Shannon will post these instructions to the IFPS server.

f. AWIPS II Test Case Point of Contact Opportunity (John Tatum): John Tatum is the AWIPS II Test Case Manager and is working in the AWIPS Support Branch of OPS (OPS21). John is working on putting together a list of field focal points to assist in creating test cases. John is asking the Regional Focal Points for specific assistance in the systems and communications area. John plans on contacting each focal point in the near future.

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

Alaska Region: nothing significant to report.

Central Region: Our site LOT has been experiencing GFE issues lately during severe weather and it is different from any of the WarnGen issues that have arisen of late. A trouble ticket has been reported to the NCF. Also, Bill Gery brought up the issue of needing a mod note for the optical mice to be hooked up to new hardware in the future. WSH personnel are reluctant to address the problem with a nationally issued mod note and John Tatum of OPS21 took the action to mediate the issue.

Eastern Region: We are asking that all our coastal sites schedule the installation of OB8.3 on the Oracle calendar before August 5 and then the inland sites can schedule after that date.

Pacific Region: nothing significant to report.

Western Region: nothing significant to report.

GSD: nothing significant to report.

Warning Decision Training Branch: We are having trouble getting FFMP and FSI to work in the WES 8.3. On this Friday we are going to ship out the WES 8.3 DVDs (contains OB8.3) for a week and a half of beta testing. If anyone wants to volunteer to test out WES 8.3, send Mike Magsig an email and we will have Shannon Key send you a DVD. Now that the WES development is finally stable we will be wrapping up our training development over the next week or two, so that will be coming soon as well.

The next RACC is scheduled for Wednesday, June 25, 2008. If you know of any agenda items you wish to be discussed at this RACC, please e-mail them to Jim Stenpeck and cc Frank Lucadamo. This is to ensure that all of the appropriate WSH personnel attend this RACC to address your issues.