



The Four Winds

National Weather Service Employees Organization

January 2008

FAA Seeks to Risk Lives of Flying Public — *Again*

In spite of opposition from Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Inouye, as well as from the FAA's own Traffic Management Unit Supervisors, the FAA has asked the NWS to provide a proposal for aviation support that may lead to removal of on-site meteorologists from the ARTCCs. The FAA has directed the NWS to develop the following three business models:

- Regionalizing the CWSUs to an unknown number of locations (less than 21).
- Centralizing the CWSUs to one location.
- Maintaining the current 21 CWSU structure.

The FAA has further demanded that each of these models includes increased and improved services at reduced cost than the current CWSU program.

In response to this FAA document, the NWS has formed a team to formulate proposals to meet the FAA requirements. Members of the team include WFO MICs, CWSU MICs, Regional Aviation Meteorologists and the Aviation Weather Center. Bill Hirt from the Aviation Weather Center is the NWSEO representative on this team.

The team was forced to rush into its first meeting during the week of January 14th in Silver Spring due to an unrealistic time table demanded by the FAA. The team will meet again the week of January 28th in Silver Spring. A preliminary proposal for the NWS Corporate Board is to be provided by February 5th for consideration by the Corporate Board at their late February meeting.

Members of Congress have expressed their concern with the FAA's action and have commissioned the GAO to investigate the Agency and the CWSU situation. "Thanks to efforts by the NWSEO and contributors to our Political Action Campaign, the NWSEO has created an environment where the FAA has admitted to the political ramifications of not choosing the NWS as the provider for these weather services," NWSEO Executive Vice President Bill Hopkins stated

The National Weather Service and NWSEO are working closely together on this latest attempt by the FAA to boot the NWS from being the taxpayer's weather provider. "The FAA is playing a dangerous game of Russian Roulette with the lives of the flying public," said Vice President Hopkins. The NWSEO is committed to work on this team to keep the skies safe and the efficient flow of air traffic.