

§946.9 Certification of restructuring.

(a) The Secretary shall publish each proposed certification in the FEDERAL REGISTER at least 60 days prior to certification. If, after consideration of the public comments received, the Secretary agrees that the proposed restructuring will not result in any degradation of service to the service area, he or she shall so certify by submitting a certification report to Congress. Upon transmittal of the certification by the secretary, NWS shall promptly publish the certification in the FEDERAL REGISTER stating where copies of the certification and the accompanying documents may be obtained.

(b) The Responsible Meteorologist may restructure only after the certification has been submitted to Congress.

(c) Any field office for which restructuring has been certified under this section shall also be subject to additional certification if that office is closed during stage 2 of the modernization. No field office will close before January 1, 1996.

§946.10 Liaison officer.

Prior to restructuring a field office, the Responsible Meteorologist shall designate at least one person in the affected service area to act as a liaison officer for at least a 2-year period whose duties shall be:

(a) Provide timely information regarding the activities of the NWS which may affect service to the community including specifically modernization and restructuring activities; and

(b) Work with area users, including persons associated with general aviation, civil defense, emergency preparedness, and the news media, with respect to the provision of timely weather warnings and forecasts.

APPENDIX A TO PART 946—NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MODERNIZATION CRITERIA

I. Modernization Criteria for Actions Not Requiring Certification

(A) Commissioning of New Weather Observation Systems

(1) Automated Surface Observation Systems (ASOS)

Purpose: Successful commissioning for full operational use requires a demonstration, by tests and other means, that the ASOS equipment, as installed in the field office, meets its technical requirements; that the prescribed operating, maintenance, and logistic support elements are in place; that operations have been properly staffed with trained personnel and that the equipment can be operated with all other installed mating elements of the modernized NWS system.

NOTE: It may be necessary to incorporate work-arounds to complete some of the items listed below in a timely and cost-effective manner. A work-around provides for an alternative method of meeting a commissioning criteria through the application of a pre-approved operational procedure implemented on a temporary basis, for example, by human augmentation of the observation for the occurrence of freezing rain, until such time as a freezing rain sensor has been accepted for operational use with ASOS. The ASOS Plan referenced below includes a process for recommending, approving, and documenting work arounds and requires that they be tracked as open items until they can be eliminated by implementation of the originally intended capability.

References: The criteria and evaluation elements for commissioning are set forth and further detailed in the NWS-Sponsored Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) Site Component Commissioning Plan (the ASOS Plan), more specifically in Addendum I, Appendix D of the ASOS Site Component Commissioning Evaluation Package (the ASOS Package).

Criteria: a. ASOS Acceptance Test: The site component acceptance test, which includes objective tests to demonstrate that the ASOS, as installed at the given site, meets its technical specifications, has been successfully completed in accordance with item 1a, p. D-2 of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

b. **Sensor Siting:** Sensor sitings provide representative observations in accordance with Appendix C of the ASOS Package, Guidance for Evaluating Representativeness of ASOS Observations and item 1b, p. D-2 of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

c. **Initialization Parameters:** Initialization parameters are in agreement with source information provided by the ASOS Program Office, in accordance with item 1c, pp. D-2 & D-3 of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

d. **Sensor Performance Verification:** Sensor performance has been verified in accordance with the requirements stated in the ASOS Site Technical Manual and item 1d, p. D-3 of the ASOS Package.

e. **Field Modification Kits/Firmware Installed:** All critical field modification kits and firmware for the site as required by attachments 3a & b (pp. D-45 & D-46) or memorandum issued to the regions, have been installed on the ASOS in accordance with item 1e, p. D-4 of Appendix of the ASOS Package.

f. **Operations and Maintenance Documentation:** A full set of operations and maintenance documentation is available in accordance with items 2a-h, pp. D-5 & D-6 of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

g. **Notification of and Technical Coordination with Users:** All affected users have been notified of the initial date for ASOS operations and have received a technical coordination package in accordance with item 2i, pp. D-6 & D-7 of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

h. **Availability of Trained Operations Personnel:** Adequate operations staff are available, training materials are available, and required training has been completed, per section 3.2.3.1 of the ASOS Plan, in accordance with items 3a-c, p. D-8 of Appendix D of the ASOS package.

i. **Maintenance Capability:** Proper maintenance personnel and support systems and arrangements are available in accordance with items 4a-e, pp. D-9 & D-10 of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

j. **Performance of Site Interfaces:** The equipment can be operated in all of its required modes and in conjunction with all of its interfacing equipment per the detailed checklists of items 5a-b, pp. D-11 & D-19 of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

k. **Support of Associated NWS Forecasting and Warning Services:** The equipment provides proper support of NWS forecasting and warning services and archiving, including operation of all specified automatic and manually augmented modes per the checklist, items 6a-e, pp. D-20 to D-29, of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

l. **Service Backup Capabilities:** Personnel, equipment, and supporting services are available and capable of providing required backup readings and services in support of operations when primary equipment is inoperable in accordance with items 7a-g, pp. D-

30 to D-32, of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

m. **Augmentation Capabilities:** Personnel are available and trained to provide augmentation of ASOS observations in accordance with augmentation procedures, items 8a-c, p. D-33 of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

n. **Representativeness of Observations:** Observations are representative of the hydrometeorological conditions of the observing location as determined by a period of observation of at least 60 days prior to commissioning in accordance with Appendix C and item 6e, pp. D-27 to D-29 of Appendix D of the ASOS Package.

(2) WSR-88D Radar System

Purpose: Successful commissioning for full operational use requires a demonstration, by tests and other means, that the WSR-88D radar system, as installed in the field office, meets its technical requirements; that the prescribed operating, maintenance, and logistic support elements are in place; that operations have been properly staffed with trained personnel; and that the equipment can be operated with all other installed mating elements of the modernized NWS system.

NOTE: It may be necessary to incorporate work-arounds to complete some of the items listed below in a timely and cost-effective manner. A work-around provides for an alternative method of meeting a commissioning criteria through the application for a pre-approved operational procedure implemented on a temporary basis. The WSR-88D Plan referenced below includes a process for recommending, approving, and documenting work arounds and requires that they be tracked as open items until they can be eliminated by implementation of the originally intended capability.

Reference: The criteria and evaluation elements for commissioning are set forth and further detailed in the NWS-Sponsored WSR-88D Site Component Commissioning Plan (the 88D Plan) and an Attachment to that Plan, called the WSR-88D Site Component Commissioning Evaluation Package (the WSR-88D Package).

Criteria: a. **WSR-88D Radar Acceptance Test:** The site component acceptance test, which includes objective tests to demonstrate that the WSR-88D radar, as installed at the given site, meets its technical specifications, has been successfully completed in accordance with items 1a-f, p. A-2 of Appendix A of the WSR-88D Package.

b. **Availability of Trained Operations and Maintenance Personnel:** Adequate operations and maintenance staffs are available, training materials are available, and required training has been completed in accordance with items 2a-h, pp. A-3 & A-4 of Appendix A of the WSR-88D Package.

c. Satisfactory Operation of System Interfaces: The system can be operated in all of its required modes and in conjunction with all of its interfacing equipment in accordance with items 3a-e, p. A-5 of Appendix A of the WSR-88D Package.

d. Satisfactory Support of Associated NWS Forecasting and Warning Services: The system provides proper support of NWS forecasting and warning services, including at least 96 percent availability of the radar coded message for a period of 30 consecutive days prior to commissioning in accordance with items 4a-kk, pp. A-6 to A-17 of Appendix A of the WSR-88D Package.

e. Service Backup Capabilities: Service backup capabilities function properly when the primary system is inoperable in accordance with items 5a-e, p. A-18 of Appendix A of the WSR-88D Package.

f. Documentation for Operations and Maintenance: A full set of operations and maintenance documentation is available in accordance with items 6a-n, pp. A-19 to A-25 of Appendix A of the WSR-88D Package.

g. Spare Parts and Test Equipment: A full complement of spare parts and test equipment is available on site in accordance with items 7a-e, p. A-26, of Appendix A of the WSR-88D Package.

(B) Decommissioning an Outdated NWS Radar

Purpose: Successful decommissioning of an old radar requires assurance that the existing radar is no longer needed to support delivery of services and products and local office operations.

References: The criteria and evaluation elements for decommissioning are set forth and further detailed in the NWS-Sponsored Network and Local Warning Radars (Including Adjunct Equipment) Site Component Decommissioning Plan (the Plan), more specifically in Appendix B to that Plan, called the Site Component Decommissioning Evaluating Package, and in Section 3.3 of the Internal and External Communication and Coordination Plan for the Modernization and Associated Restructuring of the Weather Service.

Criteria: a. Replacing WSR-88D(s) Commissioning/User Service Confirmation: The replacing WSR-88D(s) have been commissioned and user confirmation of services has been successfully completed, *i.e.*, all valid user complaints related to actual system performance have been satisfactorily resolved, in accordance with items 1a-c, p. B-10 of Appendix B of the Plan.

b. Operation Not Dependent on Existing Radar: The outdated radar is not required for service coverage, in accordance with items 2a-c, p. B-11 of Appendix B of the Plan.

c. Notification of Users: Adequate notification of users has been provided, in accordance with items 3a-f, pp. B-12 & B-13 of Appendix B of the Plan.

d. Disposal of Existing Radar: Preparations for disposal of the old existing radar have been completed, in accordance with items 4a-d, pp. B-14 & B-15 of Appendix B of the Plan.

(C) Evaluating Staffing Needs for Field Offices in Affected Areas

References: The criteria and evaluation elements are set forth and further detailed in the ASOS and WSR-88D Evaluation Packages and in the Human Resources and Position Management Plan for the National Weather Service Modernization and Associated Restructuring (the Human Resources Plan).

Criteria: 1. Availability of Trained Operations and Maintenance Personnel at a NEXRAD Weather Service Forecast Office or NEXRAD Weather Service Office: Adequate operations and maintenance staffs are available to commission a WSR-88D, specifically criterion b, set forth in section I.A.2. of this Appendix which includes meeting the Stage 1 staffing levels set forth in chapter 3 of the Human Resources Plan.

2. Availability of Trained Operations and Maintenance Personnel at any field office receiving an ASOS: Adequate operations and maintenance staff are available to meet the requirements for commissioning an ASOS, specifically criteria h and i set forth in section I.A.1 of this Appendix.

II. CRITERIA FOR MODERNIZATION ACTIONS REQUIRING CERTIFICATION

(A) Modernization Criteria Common to all Types of Certifications (Except as Noted)

1. Notification: Advanced notification and the expected date of the proposed certification have been provided in the National Implementation Plan.

2. Local Weather Characteristics and Weather Related Concerns: A description of local weather characteristics and weather related concerns which affect the weather services provided to the affected service area is provided.

3. Comparison of Services: A comparison of services before and after the proposed action demonstrates that all services currently provided to the affected service area will continue to be provided with no degradation of services.

4. Recent or Excepted Modernization of NWS Operations in the Affected Service Area: A description of recent or expected modernization of NWS operations in the affected service area is provided.

5. NEXRAD Network Coverage: NEXRAD network coverage or gaps in coverage at 10,000 feet over the affected service area are identified.

6. Air Safety Appraisal (applies only to relocation and closure of field offices at an airport): Verification that there will be no degradation of service that affects aircraft safety has been made by conducting an air safety appraisal in consultation with the Federal Aviation Administration.

7. Evaluation of Services to In-state Users (applies only to relocation and closure of the only field office in a state): Verification that there will be no degradation of weather services provided to the state has been made by evaluating the effect on weather services provided to in-State users.

8. Liaison Officer: Arrangements have been made to retain a Liaison Officer in the affected service area for at least two years to provide timely information regarding the activities of the NWS which may affect service to the community, including modernization and restructuring; and to work with area weather service users, including persons associated with general aviation, civil defense, emergency preparedness, and the news media, with respect to the provision of timely weather warnings and forecasts.

9. Meteorologist-In-Charge's (MIC) Recommendation to Certify: The MIC of the future WFO that will have responsibility for the affected service area has recommended certification in accordance with 15 CFR 946.7(a).

10. Regional Director's Certification: The cognizant Regional Director has approved the MIC's recommended certification of no degradation of service to the affected service area in accordance with 15 CFR 946.8.

(B) Modernization Criteria Unique to Consolidation Certifications

1. WSR-88D Commissioning: All necessary WSR-88D radars have been successfully commissioned in accordance with the criteria set forth in section I.A.2. of this Appendix.

2. User Confirmation of Services: All valid user complaints related to actual system performance have been satisfactorily resolved in accordance with section 3.3 of the Internal and External Communication and Coordination Plan for the Modernization and Associated Restructuring of the National Weather Service.

3. Decommissioning of Existing Radar: The existing radar, if any, has been successfully decommissioned in accordance with the criteria set forth in section I.B. of this Appendix.

(C) Modernization Criteria Unique to Relocation Certifications

1. Approval of Proposed Relocation Checklist: The cognizant regional director has approved a proposed relocation checklist setting forth the necessary elements in the relocation process to assure that all affected users will be given advanced notification of

the relocation, that delivery of NWS services and products will not be interrupted during the office relocation, and that the office to be relocated will resume full operation at the new facility expeditiously so as to minimize the service backup period.

Specific Elements: a. Notification of and Technical Coordination with Users: The proposed relocation checklist provides for the notification of and technical coordination with all affected users.

b. Identification and Preparation of Backup Sites: The proposed relocation checklist identifies the necessary backup sites and the steps necessary to prepare to use backup sites to ensure service coverage during the move and checkout period.

c. Start of Service Backup: The proposed relocation checklist provides for invocation of service backup by designated sites prior to office relocation.

d. Systems, Furniture and Communications: The proposed relocation checklist identifies the steps necessary to move all systems and furniture to the new facility and to install communications at the new facility.

e. Installation and Checkout: The proposed relocation checklist identifies all steps to install and checkout systems and furniture and to connect to communications at the new facility.

f. Validation of Systems Operability and Service Delivery: The proposed relocation checklist provides for validation of system operability and service delivery from the new facility.

2. Publishing of the Proposed Relocation Checklist and Evidence form Completed Moves: The proposed relocation checklist and the evidence from other similar office moves that have been completed, have been published in the FEDERAL REGISTER for public comment. The evidence from the other office moves indicates that they have been successfully completed.

3. Resolution of Public Comments Received: All responsive public comments received from publication, in the FEDERAL REGISTER, of the checklists and of the evidence from completed moves are satisfactorily answered.

(D) Modernization Criteria Unique to Automation Certifications

1. Compliance with flight aviation rules (applies on airports only): Consultation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has verified that the weather services provided after the commissioning of the relevant ASOS unit(s) will be in full compliance with applicable Federal Aviation Regulations promulgated by the FAA.

2. ASOS Commissioning: The relevant ASOS unit(s) have been successfully commissioned in accordance with the criteria set forth in section I.A.1 of Appendix A to the

Weather Service Modernization Regulations, 15 CFR part 946.

3. User Confirmation of Services: Any valid user complaints related to actual system performance received since commissioning of the ASOS have been satisfactorily resolved and the issues addressed in the MIC's recommendation for certification.

4. Aviation Observation Requirement: At sites subject to automation certification, all surface observations and reports required for aviation services can be generated by an ASOS augmented as necessary by non-NWS personnel.

a. The ASOS observation will be augmented/backed-up to the level specified in Appendix B as described in the Summary Chart of the FAA's Weather Observation Service Standards.

b. The transition checklist has been signed by the appropriate Region Systems Operations Division Chief (applies to service level A, B and C airports only).

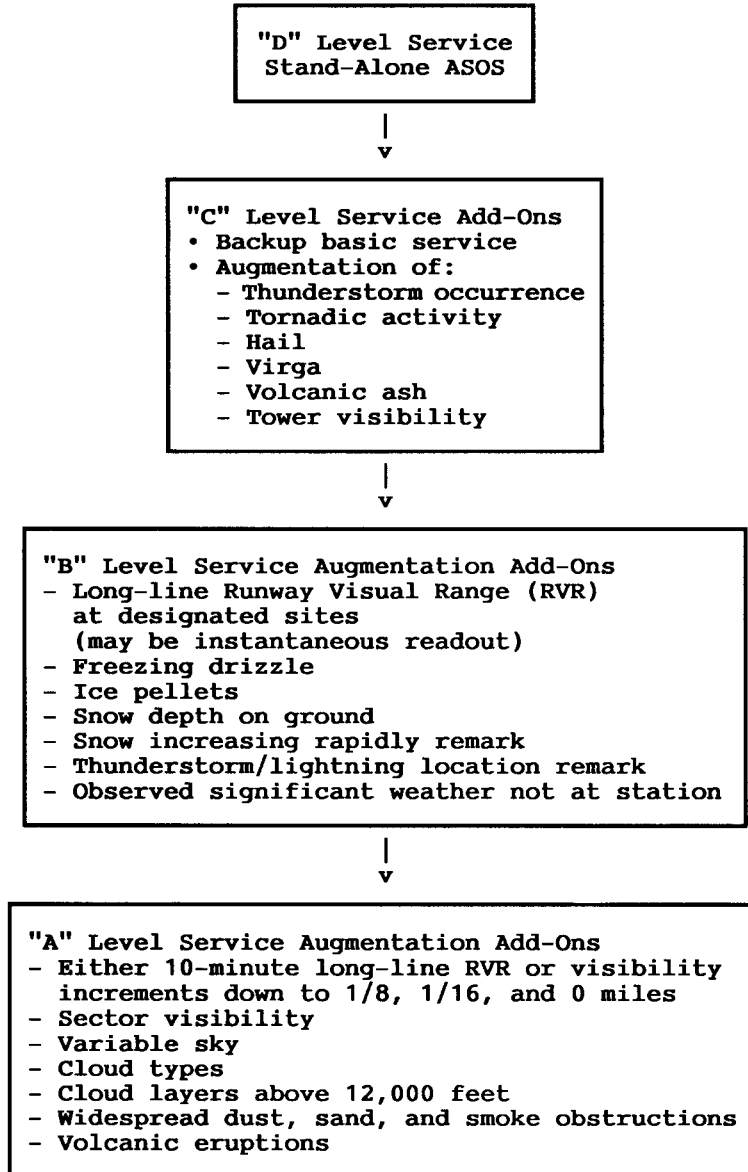
c. Thunderstorm occurrence is reported in the ASOS observation through the use of a lightning sensor (applies to service level D airports only, excluding Homer, Alaska).

d. Freezing rain occurrence is reported in the ASOS observation through the use of a freezing rain sensor. Among service level D airports, this criterion is not applicable to Ely, Nevada and Lander, Wyoming.

5. Pilot Education and Outreach Completed: The Air Safety Foundation has conducted a pilot education and outreach effort to educate pilots on the use of automated observations and measure their understanding and acceptance of automated observing systems, and the MTC has had an opportunity to review the results of this effort (applies to service level D airports only).

6. General Surface Observation Requirement: The total observations available are adequate to support the required inventory of services to users in the affected area. All necessary hydrometeorological data and information are available through ASOS as augmented in accordance with this section, through those elements reported as supplementary data by the relevant Weather Forecast Office(s), or through other complementary sources. The adequacy of the total surface observation is addressed in the MTC's recommendation for certification.

Summary of FAA's Weather Observation Service Standards



(E) Modernization Criteria Unique to Closure Certifications

1. Consolidation Certification: If the field office proposed for closure has or will be con-

solidated, as defined in §946.2 of the basic modernization regulations, this action has been completed as evidenced by the approved

certification or can be completed as evidenced by all of the documentation that all of the requirements of sections II.A. and II.B of this Annex have been completed.

2. Automation Certification: If the field office proposed for closure has or will be automated, as defined in §946.2 of the basic modernization regulations, this action has been completed as evidenced by the approved certification or can be completed as evidenced by documentation that all of the requirements of sections II.A. and II.C. of this Annex has been completed.

3. Remaining Services and/or Observations: All remaining service and/or observational responsibilities, if applicable to the field office proposed for closure, have been transmitted as addressed in the MIC's recommendation for certification.

4. User Confirmation of Services: Any valid user complaints received related to provision of weather services have been satisfactorily resolved and the issues addressed in the MIC's recommendation for certification.

5. Warning and Forecast Verification: Warning and forecast verification statistics, produced in accordance with the Closure Certification Verification Plan, have been utilized in support of the MIC's recommendation for certification.

[59 FR 9923, Mar. 2, 1994 as amended at 61 FR 39865, July 31, 1996; 61 FR 53311, Oct. 11, 1996; 62 FR 38903, July 21, 1997]

APPENDIX B TO PART 946—AIRPORT TABLES

"A" Level Service Airports:	
*Akron, OH	CAK
*Albany, NY	ALB
*Atlanta, GA	ATL
*Baltimore, MD	BWI
*Boston, MA	BOS
Charlotte, NC	CLT
*Chicago-O'Hare (AV), IL	ORD
Cincinnati, OH	CVG
Columbus, OH	CMH
*Dayton, OH	DAY
*Des Moines, IA	DSM
*Detroit, MI	DTW
*Fairbanks, AK	FAI
*Fresno, CA	FAT
*Greensboro, NC	GSO
*Hartford, CT	BDL
Indianapolis, IN	IND
*Kansas City, MO	MCI
*Lansing, MI	LAN
Las Vegas, NV	LAS
Los Angeles (AV), CA	LAX
*Louisville, KY	SDF
*Milwaukee, WI	MKE
*Minneapolis, MN	MSP
*Newark, NJ	EWR
*Oklahoma City, OK	OKC
Phoenix, AZ	PHX
*Portland, OR	PDX

*Providence, RI	PVD
*Raleigh, NC	RDU
*Richmond, VA	RIC
*Rochester, NY	ROC
*Rockford, IL	RFD
*San Antonio, TX	SAT
San Diego, CA	SAN
*San Francisco, CA	SFO
*Spokane, WA	GEG
*Syracuse, NY	SYR
Tallahassee, FL	TUL
Tulsa, OK	TUL
"B" Level Service Airports:	
*Baton Rouge, LA	BTR
*Billings, MT	BIL
*Charleston, WV	CRW
*Chattanooga, TN	CHA
Colorado Springs, CO	COS
Daytona Beach, FL	DAB
El Paso, TX	ELP
Flint, MI	FNT
Fort Wayne, IN	FWA
Honolulu, HI	HNL
*Huntsville, AL	HSV
*Knoxville, TN	TYS
*Lincoln, NE	LNK
Lubbock, TX	LBB
*Madison, WI	MSN
*Moline, IL	MLI
*Montgomery, AL	MGM
*Muskegon, MI	MKG
*Norfolk, VA	ORF
Peoria, IL	PIA
*Savannah, GA	SAV
*South Bend, IN	SBN
Tucson, AZ	TUS
*West Palm Beach, FL	PBI
*Youngstown, OH	YNG
"C" Level Service Airports:	
Abilene, TX	ABI
Allentown, PA	ABE
Asheville, NC	AVL
Athens, GA	AHN
Atlantic City, NJ	ACY
Augusta, GA	AGS
Austin, TX	AUS
Bakersfield, CA	BFL
Bridgeport, CT	BDR
Bristol, TN	TRI
Casper, WY	CPR
Columbia, MO	COU
Columbus, GA	CSG
Dubuque, IA	DBQ
Elkins, WV	EKN
Erie, PA	ERI
Eugene, OR	EUG
Evansville, IN	EVV
Fargo, ND	FAR
Fort Smith, AR	FSM
Grand Island, NE	GRI
Helena, MT	HLN
Huntington, WV	HTS
Huron, SD	HON
Kahului, HI	OGG
Key West, FL	EYW
Lewiston, ID	LWS
Lexington, KY	LEX

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Lynchburg, VA	LYH	Astoria, OR	AST
Macon, GA	MCN	Beckley, WV	BKW
Mansfield, OH	MFD	Caribou, ME	CAR
Meridian, MS	MEI	Concordia, KS	CNK
Olympia, WA	OLM	Concord, NH	CON
Port Arthur, TX	BPT	Ely, NV	ELY
Portland, ME	PWM	Havre, MT	HVR
Rapid City, SD	RAP	Homer, AK	HOM
Redding, CA	RDD	Houghton Lake, MI	HTL
Reno, NV	RNO	International Falls, MN	INL
Roanoke, VA	ROA	Kalispell, MT	FCA
Rochester, MN	RST	Lander, WY	LND
Salem, OR	SLE	Norfolk, NE	OFK
Santa Maria, CA	SMX	Sault Ste. Marie, MI	SSM
Sioux City, IA	SUX	Scottsbluff, NE	BFF
Springfield, IL	SPI	Sheridan, WY	SHR
Stockton, CA	SCK	St. Cloud, MN	STC
Toledo, OH	TOL	Tupelo, MS	TUP
Waco, TX	ACT	Valentine, NE	VTN
Waterloo, IA	ALO	Victoria, TX	VCT
Wilkes-Barre, PA	AVP	Wichita, Falls, TX	SPS
Williamsport, PA	IPT	Williston, ND	ISN
Wilmington, DE	ILG	Winnemucca, NV	WMC
Worcester, MA	ORH		
Yakima, WA	YKM		
"D" Level Service Airports:		* Long-line RVR designated site.	
Alamosa, CO	ALS		
Alpena, MI	APN		

[62 FR 38905, July 21, 1997]