



UNCLASSIFIED



Thoughts on Research-to-Operations (R2O... and O2R2O)

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Flavors of Research-to-Operations (R2O)



■ Long-term Programs

- Requirement Vetting
- Formal Program of Record

■ Research & Development

- Formal R&D Program
 - Successful R&D → Transition to Lifecycle Management Program of Record work

■ Operational Changes at "Building Level"

- GALWEM deterministic NWP model (contractor maintains baseline)

■ Operational Changes at "Local Level"

- Air Force Weather Ensemble Prediction Suite (AFWEPS; 16 WS maintenance)



R2O: Not Just Systems and "Things"...



- **#1 R2O Success Story: Forecasting Mentality *Paradigm Shift***
- **Movement from Deterministic to Probabilistic Thinking**
 - Fully incorporating Operational Risk Management -ORM
 - The move from YES/NO ...and Red-Yellow-Green ...to probability-based
 - It's not over. It's an *ongoing learning process* for users and developers
- **Research --**
 - Leveraged ensemble research that was taking place at NCAR, Universities (and we continue to do so)
- **Development --**
 - In the beginning we had to be the developers and the salespersons
 - *Local development* ultimately resulted in AFWEPS



Why Should We Run Ensembles?



- Running a deterministic weather model produces one possible outcome...
 - ...but it is wrong! What do you mean it's wrong?
 - Models simply can't start with a perfect initial analysis; they're "flawed from the start"!
 - Various physics equations are applied to estimate multiple intricate and complex processes in the atmosphere (physics parameterizations)
 - They're all estimates and they're all not perfect
 - One model run may do well in certain areas, for certain variables/times, but not all
 - One solution? Run the model many times to produce probability of outcomes
 - Use slightly perturbed analyses, different boundary conditions, and/or model physics
 - Each different "ensemble member" produces a different solution.
 - Running multiple ensemble members for mult. solutions; probabilities calculated
 - Increased solution spread increases chance what will occur is sampled
 - Repeatability of a solution (higher probability) => gives higher forecaster confidence



R20: Global-Scale Ensemble - GEPS



- 16 WS runs the Air Force Weather Ensemble Prediction Suite (AFWEPS)
 - AFWEPS produces global and mesoscale ensemble products
- The Global Ensemble Prediction System (GEPS)
 - GEPS derives probability products from 63 global ensemble forecast solutions
 - 21 global ensemble solutions (called members) from 3 centers: (1) U.S. National Center for Environmental Prediction (NCEP), (2) the U.S. Navy (FNMOC), and (3) Environment Canada
 - GEPS Probability products are available out to 10 days, 6-hr temporal resolution
 - GEPS Four-Panel products show deterministic GALWEM, GFS from NCEP, NAVGEM from FNMOC, and GEM from EC in one product
 - 4-panel products go out 7 days with 3-hr temporal resolution
 - Point Ensemble Probability (PEP) products display probability for 20+ parameters and thresholds in a convenient table for the entire forecast projection at a selected point
 - Data in GEPS PEPs goes out 15 days with 6hr temporal resolution



R20: Mesoscale Ensemble - MEPS



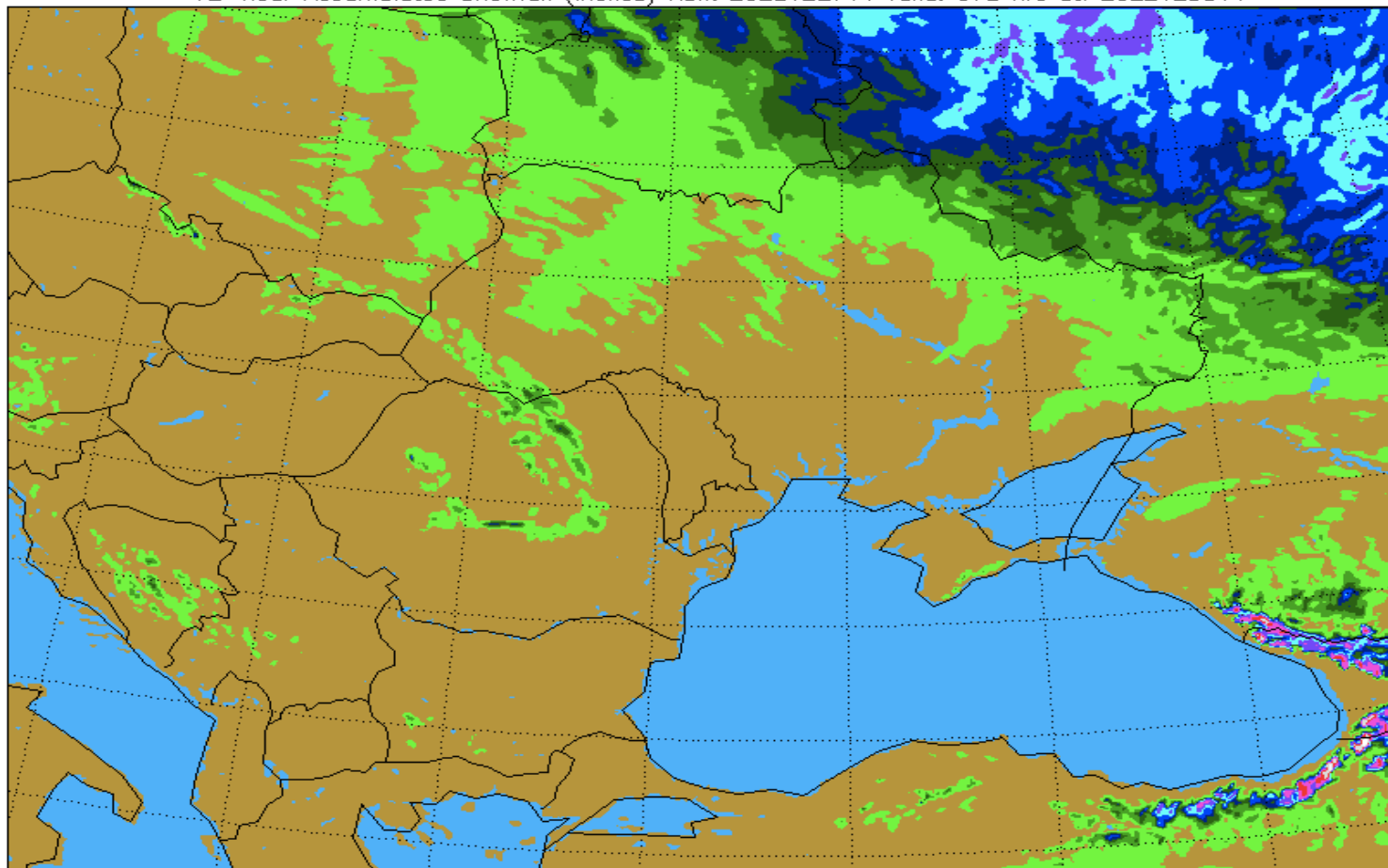
- The Mesoscale Ensemble Prediction System (MEPS)
 - The Weather Research Forecast Model - Advanced Research WRF (WRF-ARW) is the base model for MEPS, and is run by the 16th Weather Squadron
 - 16 members with diverse initial conditions and varied physics packages are cycled, with a distinct run every 2 hours.
 - Macroscale - Synoptic Scale: 20 km resolution; 144hr fcst, 2hr time step
 - Currently 20 domains covering much of the world (and almost all land area)
 - Mesoscale - Microscale: 4 km resolution; 72hr fcst, 1hr time step
 - Currently 7 domains plus 8 relocatable theaters, created for specific users/requirements
 - Small, localized 1 km resolution MEPS for significant local terrain challenges
 - Currently 6 theaters, 30hr forecast, 1hr time step; computationally expensive
 - Developed for user requirements to better resolve local convection, wind, marine lysrs
- PEPs are produced for 20km, 4km, and 1km ensemble data (28 parameters)



R20 -- AFWEPS:

Black Sea Theater, 72-hr Snowfall Accumulation

72-hour Accumulated Snowfall (inches) Run: 2022122714 valid: 072 hrs at: 2022123014



OBS: CONV=0 RAD=0 GPS=0 // MDL: RES=4km GLB=GEM CYC=00 MEM=9 LSM=Noah MP=WDM6 PBL=YSU





O2R20: Addition of Trend Information



Select a model GEPS 20km MEPS 4km MEPS 1km MEPS

Enter an ICAO Submit

Select a time



[How to use this product](#)

Probabilistic Forecast Trends in the last 12 hours:

>15% increase

>15% decrease

20 km MEPS APR 25/22Z 2023

KANSAS CITY INTL
MODEL BOX INFO
39.3000 lat 39.2949 lat
-94.7100 lon -94.8046 lon
313 meters elevation 274 meters elevation

WED 26 THR 27 FRI 28 SAT 29

MAROON: >15% increase in last 12 hours
BLUE: >15% decrease in last 12 hours

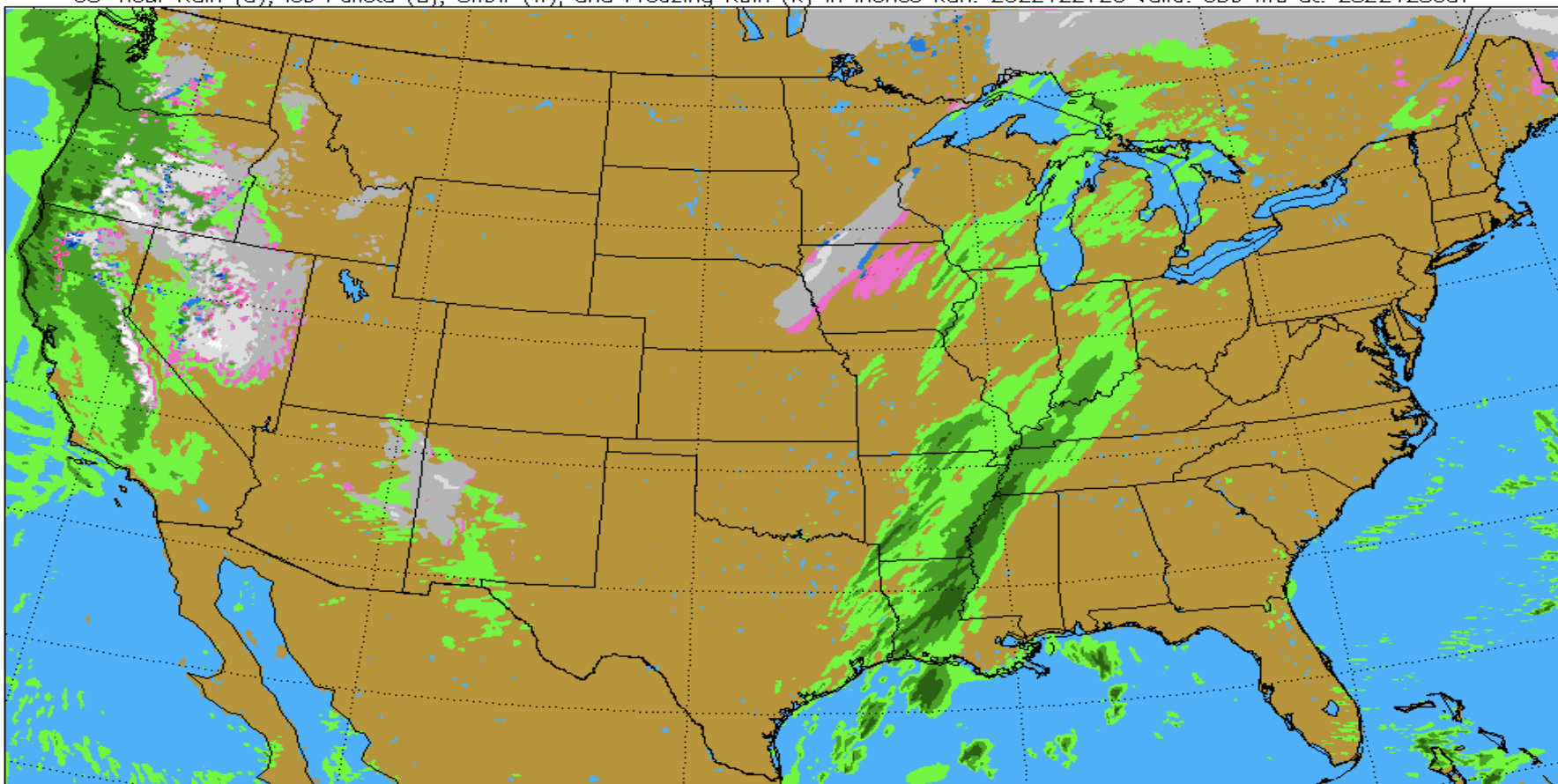
	WED 26												THR 27												FRI 28												SAT 29											
	0Z	02	04	06	08	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	0Z	02	04	06	08	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	0Z	02	04	06	08	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	0Z	02	04	06	08	10	12					
Surface winds	...																																															
Wind Gusts GT 25 KT	...																																															
Wind Gusts GT 35 KT	...																																															
Wind Gusts GT 50 KT	...																																															
Wind Gusts GT 65 KT	...																																															
LLWS GT 30 KT	...																																															
SUS XWND GT 15 KT RWY:19L	...																																															
SUS XWND GT 25 KT RWY:19L	...																																															
SUS XWND GT 35 KT RWY:19L	...																																															
Precipitation	...																																															
Precip GT 0.05 IN in 6 hr	...																																															
Precip GT 2.0 IN in 12 hr	...																																															
FZRA GT 0.01 IN	...																																															
SN GT 0.1 IN	...																																															
SN GT 2.0 IN in 12 hr	...																																															
SN GT 6.0 IN in 24 hr	...																																															
Thunderstorms	...																																															
Lightning within 10 NM	...																																															
Svr Wx within 25 NM	...																																															
Cig + Vis	...																																															
Visibility LT 5 miles	...																																															
Visibility LT 3 miles	...																																															
Visibility LT 1 mile	...																																															
Ceiling LT 3000 ft	...																																															
Ceiling LT 1000 ft	...																																															
Ceiling LT 500 ft	...																																															
Others	...																																															
Mean Temperature (F)	...																																															
Mean Wind Speed (KT)	...																																															
Prob GT 80% Cloud Cover	...																																															
Station Adj ALSTG	...																																															



Example of 4km MEPS: CONUS Theater, Precipitation Type at T+59hr



03-hour Rain (G), Ice Pellets (B), Snow (W), and Freezing Rain (R) in inches Run: 2022122720 valid: 059 hrs at: 2022123007



OBS: CONV=0 RAD=0 GPS=0 // MDL: RES=4km GLB=GEM CYC=12 MEM=12 LSM=Noah MP=Millbra PBL=BouL





R2O Process: Stakeholder Engagement



- These are examples of improvements directly from stakeholder engagement
- R2O should involve O back to the R...
 - Operators feedback to the Researchers, or "Users to the Developers"
- 16 WS proactively stood up SE Team to formalize this process - O2R
 - Began with surveys, over 100 organizations contacted now...
 - What do you use, where are shortcomings, what do you need?
 - Visits to bases and airfield OPS – in-person if possible, or via zoom as nec.
 - Get to true users at "pointy tip of the spear" -- weather and non-weather operators
- Process went beyond "what" is needed & into the "why" it is needed
 - Researchers and developers need to understand operations and wx impacts
 - Learn about use-cases and how forecast data applied
 - Operators may not know what to ask for, nor what we have the capability to provide



Continuous SE Feedback - O2R20



- Researchers and developers receive a solid understanding of:
 - How we can help
 - How our products are used
 - Downfield Intel and use-cases; more complete case studies
- Users too gain a better understanding of:
 - What we and the models can provide
 - The current limitations of the model data
 - What the products they receive really mean
 - Guidance on how forecast data can be applied to their use-cases
- "O2R20" -- user feedback > development > OPS loop – "continuous R20"





R2O Evolution, Lessons Learned



- New AFWERX (SPACEWERX) agile innovation construct
 - Technology directorate of the AFRL, innovation arm of USAF
 - Teaming across academia, industry, interagency/int'l partners
 - Help w/ networking (SBIR/STTR), funding (STRATFI/TACFI), problem solving, transition
 - Foster collaboration & innovation for faster and affordable capability transition
 - 4 cores of AFWERX: AFVentures, Spark, Prime, SpaceWERX (learn more: <https://afwerx.com>)
- R2O Lessons Learned from various types of programs include...
 - Enable continuous feedback with users, keep progressing forward toward real need
 - Include weather piece and SME(s) right from the start
 - Consider weather impacts on mission success from very beginning of design
 - Test in adverse weather; Avoid expensive and/or difficult retrofitting
- O2R2O is a continuous process & needed to provide best actionable support



More Information



- Thank you for the opportunity to provide some thoughts from this middle and lower level perspective. We call it "grass roots" at times...
- Please contact me with any questions!
- Gordon.Brooks@us.af.mil