From: Christopher Landsea - NOAA Federal <<u>chris.landsea@noaa.gov</u>> Sent: Wed, Aug 24, 2022 1:40 pm Subject: Questions regarding radiofax and marine analysis/forecast charts

Dear Maritime Partner,

Basic question: If you, or others you know, utilize marine analysis or forecast charts, are they obtained via radiofax, ftpmail, and/or another source? If radiofax is used, is that found to be useful/reliable? Thanks for any information if you can find a moment and wish to respond.

Sincerely, Chris Dr. Chris Landsea Branch Chief, Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch NOAA/NWS/NCEP/National Hurricane Center 11691 S.W. 17th Street Miami, Florida 33165 <u>Chris.Landsea@noaa.gov</u> P: 305-229-4446

"If you're asking me about what FEMA is doing differently this year based upon a seasonal hurricane forecast, I look at you as if you have a big 'A' on your forehead: 'Amateur'." - Craig Fugate, Director of FEMA, 16 April 2014

Thomas Cordero <discoverybaypr@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 25, 12:10 PM (5 days ago)

to me

Hi Chris:

I have received your email and wish to emphasize how important receiving your marine analysis and forecast charts is to a significant majority of the thousands of members of the Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA).

I believe ftpmail is more popular but the members that use radiofax find it to be both useful and reliable.

Thank you for all the great services that NOAA has provided to our members along the years.

Cordially,

Tom Cordero

Thomas C. Cordero VP, SSCA <u>787.691.3536</u>

frankssmith@gmail.com

Thu, Aug 25, 1:58 PM (5 days ago)

to me

Dr. Landsea ...

I am the owner/captain of a blue-water sailboat. I received your email below and wanted to provide some input. NOAAs analysis and forecasting products are critical to the safe and successful operation of my vessel. Although I have circumnavigated, both privately and while in the Navy, I operate primarily in the Atlantic, Caribbean, and European/Mediterranean waters. At home, CBOFS, weather broadcasts, and weather fax (mostly NMF and NMG) provide my base information across inland, coastal, and offshore passages. The graphical products are great for coastal/near shore use. Before passage departure, and while under internet access, using FTP to access the radiofax files and graphic products works fine. However, the NOAA products really shine when accessed via single-side band, NAVTEX, and via third-party providers such as WINLINK for FTPMAIL capability while offshore. This accessibility gives me the ability to react in near/real time to changes in weather conditions that really makes a difference. Because of this accessibility, especially of the radiofax broadcast, it is a required component of our Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

I admit that I use France's METEO and the UK MET office products when I have to due to geography but the ease of access to the NOAA products and information set the bar for safety at sea for all weather and related events. I am a huge fan of the hard work provided by the marine products crew and the products keep getting better.

While I can continue in this vein, I believe my point is clear - Radiofax, NAVTEX, and FTPMail programs provide a vital service to mariners and are actively used.

If I can confuse the conversation any further, please contact me at your convenience.

Best regards

Frank

Frank & Judy Smith MSV ATHENEA Currently Laying: Chesapeake Bay, USA

c/o Maryland Yacht Club 1500 Fairview Beach Road Pasadena, MD 21122 USA

+1.703.662.3773 tel

msvathenea@gmail.com http://msvathenea.com M.S.V. ATHENEA US Doc #: 1100182 MMSI: 366889820

> Aug 26, 2022, 7:48 PM (4 days ago)

Kevin Hedgepeth <khedgepe@presys.com>

to me, Loring

Dr Landsea,

Thank you for reaching out to the Winlink Development Team to ask your question:

Basic question: If you, or others you know, utilize marine analysis or forecast charts, are they obtained via radiofax, ftpmail, and/or another source? If radiofax is used, is that found to be useful/reliable?

The software products that the winlink team offers extensively uses weather and marine related products. The system offers a catalog of weather and marine related products that can be downloaded from the NOAA/WX servers via a catalog. The end users open the software, navigate to the catalog, select the weather and/or marine forecast items they want delivered to them and send the request to the Winlink System for those items. After a short delay while the Winlink servers retrieve the requested WX products and put them into an email type outbox the end user then logs back into the Winlink system and the WX and marine forecasts are sent to the end user. In addition to the catalog Winlink System users have the ability to request any NOAA or WX product that they know is of value to them if they know the file name and the server that the product is stored on using an open format request.

This service is used via HF radio, VHF radio, and Sat Phones. The Winlink system is regularly used by maritime, Emergency Services, RV'rs and other user groups who

have an interest or need for weather information but do not have the means to retrieve the information due to a lack of internet and/or phone services.

Additionally, some land and marine based operators monitor the USCG Broadcast frequencies where Weather Fax information is sent over RF. With a radio, a computer, and a means of injecting the received weather fax digital data stream into the computer the operator is able to receive, store, and retrieve weather faxes produced by NOAA and the U.S. Weather services; without the need for any licensing.

I regularly monitor the USCG frequencies here in Eastern Oregon to receive broadcast WX faxes through my amateur radio station. I also host links to weather products through my web/file server that I maintain here at my residence that has links to weather related documents that family and friends have asked me to link for their easy access. Even though I live in Eastern Oregon, a long way from the ocean I am retired from the USCG and have many friends who still are underway in power and sailboats who rely on the Marine Forecasts to establish departure times and points, predict winds to avoid the storms, and enable them to continue to get safely underway.

I believe that the data base that supports the catalog could be massaged and a complete list of the items offered could be made available to you. However, I must warn you that list will be very, very long.

I know that radio fax is still in use and useful. I am an example of that. The catalog offered by the Winlink software most often obtains the NOAA/USWS documents via the FTP servers. Those FTP servers are invaluable to our end users.

You did raise the question about reliability. I am uncertain if you meant are the WX faxes and forecasts reliable? Or is the access via RF reliable? As for the later; the rub is RF is at the whim of solar energies, weather, location, and the quality of the equipment used to send/receive the wx products. As for the former I prefer not to answer as everyone has an opinion about the accuracy of wx forecasts.

Respectfully,

Kevin Hedgepeth Winlink Development Team Catalog Curator USCG Ret.

ChiefOps MOA - NOAA Service Account

Thu, Aug 25, 3:02 PM (5 days ago)

to me

Greetings Chris,

Throughout my career I have utilized marine analysis and forecast charts through both radiofax and ftpmail. The radiofax option provides these resources in text format, while the graphic version is provided through ftpmail. I have always found radiofax to be extremely useful and reliable. The same is true of ftpmail, though it is relied upon less frequently.

Happy to respond to additional questions if there is the need for more feedback. Thanks for continuing support of the maritime community.

/R, Stephen

CDR Stephen Barry, NOAA Chief of Operations Marine Operations Center - Atlantic 439 West York Street Norfolk, VA 23510 Office: 757-441-6842 Cell: 706-499-0282

Arnstein Mustad <amustad@gmail.com>

Fri, Aug 26, 11:15 AM (4 days ago)

to Ken, me

In response to your question regarding radio fax:

I don't use it at sea due to the poor resolution it provides. WXFAX is best suited for the macro perspective, in my opinion.

My WX source is GFS GRIB files provided by Saildocs (client/provider) and, when on or near shore, ECMWF provided by <u>windy.com</u>.

For the macro picture, for vessels making 20+ kts at sea, I can see the benefit of weather fax, but not for small slow boats.

My Current Position: Marina Del Rey

Be jolly, Arnstein Mustad <u>www.MustadMarine.com</u> Cell 510-325-9892 Fax 510-250-7732

IYT Yachtmaster for Oceans USCG 100T Master Near Coastal Radar Unlimited, STCW-95, Sail and Tow Endorsements US Sailing & Power Boating Passage Making Instructor, & USCG Capt. Lic. Instructor Delivery Captain, Club Nautique Facebook YouTube Flickr Yelp

Ryan Wartick - NOAA Federal

8:56 AM (2 hours ago)

to Lucy, _NOS, Julia, me

Lucy,

I reached out to stakeholders in my area and no one I heard back from used radiofax other than just going to the webpage (NWS Radiofax Charts for the NW Atlantic (weather.gov))

V/R

_____ **Rvan Wartick** Navigation Manager, Mid-Atlantic Office of Coast Survey National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Personal Cell: 757-268-8164

sv Sloepmouche <sloepmouche@gmail.com> Thu, Aug 25, 9:00 PM

(5 days ago)

to me

Hi Chris,

Your email was forwarded to me by the SSCA president and as a long time cruiser (since 1992), I am happy to give you some feedback.

A long time ago, I used to get radiofax daily to get an idea of wx coming my way ... guickly with the advent of Winlink and Sailmail, I ended up getting wx bulletins and forecasts via ftpmail. Nowadays, most new cruisers seem to use satellite phones to get wx with a minority using SSB to get wx bulletins.

So as far as I am concerned, radiofax is not used much at all in the sailing community.

Luc Callebaut

rob murray

Wed, Aug 24, 3:44 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Yes, I (and others I know) use radio fax to get weather forecasts. It's unique in its low cost and broad area of receipt. Many others use or have it as a back up system to satellite based wx systems.

While satellite systems like iridium go are popular, they are more complex, less reliable and much more expensive.

Thanks

Rob

Phone/WhatsApp: +1 (650) 275-2701

John P. Reardon

Wed, Aug 24, 3:46 PM (6 days ago)

to me

I receive weather charts through a variety of methods. Radiofax when I am unable to connect to the internet. I do not have a satellite connection, so it is my cellphone, wifi or radiofax. I should get better with ftpmail.

Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail on Android

Gardner, Jonathan via nclcorp.onmicrosoft.com

Aug 24, 2022, 3:48 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Hi Chris-

We are using the internet/website.

Best Regards,

Jonathan James Gardner | Director, Nautical and Port Operations P: +1 305.436.4481 | M: +1 786.863.5261 Jgardner@nclcorp.com | www.nclhltd.com Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings, Ltd.

7665 Corporate Center Drive | Miami FL 33126

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Bill KAUPAS

Aug 24, 2022, 3:48 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Dear Chris:

I use radiofax and a friend has satellite providing internet service ftpmail. I think radiofax is useful...radios are required on compulsory vessels, not always satellites...so I think it is important. Bill

Nyge

Aug 24, 2022, 3:50 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Hi Chris, I've not done a crossing for a couple of years but used radio/fax mostly. Cheap, reliable equipment and trusted data. Cheers

Nigel

Bill Crew

Aug 24, 2022, 3:57 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Yes I use them frequently. When at sea I get them via radiofax andd sometimes by ftpmail.

Lennon, Mark < Mlennon@sbulk.com>

Aug 24, 2022, 3:57 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Good Afternoon Dr. Landsea,

Hope you are well. The six vessels (US Flagged Jones Act MR Oil Tankers) that I manage all receive their marine analysis and forecast charts from a contracted service that we subscribe to - **Weather Routing Inc.** <u>www.wriwx.com</u>

Some of our vessels do still have a weather radio facsimile, however they are not used regularly. With our vessels all connected to broadband internet onboard, they would have access to the weather maps and NWS Radiofax Charts at <u>www.weather.gov</u> as their best source.

Let me know if you have any other questions on the finer points of how we operate with regards to weather data/forecasts, always glad to help.

MARK LENNON FLEET MANAGER, TANKERS

Delivering on demand

Ioanna D Master <ioannad@gpsm-fleet.gr>

Aug 24, 2022, 4:03 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Dear Dr. Chris Landsea, good day! Happy to hear from You! For the weather forecast we are using mostly internet/web: Passage Weather is using on regular basis + Inmarsat-C



Hope we help You little bit

Best Regards, Captain Demydov Oleksandr, Master of the m/v "Ioanna D"

e-mail address: ioannad@gpsm-fleet.gr

For urgent or high priority messages please use: Inm-C Telex: 463710271 / 463710273 VSAT: +870 771 301 088 FBB: +870 773 910 174

sailgail@aol.com

Aug 24, 2022, 4:56 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Hello Chris,

Havn't used radiofax in twenty years; when I did, it wasn't very reliable. Could've been our equipment. Always managed to find other source to connect.

Cheers, bear

Daragh Nagle

Aug 24, 2022, 5:23 PM (6 days ago)

to AI, me

Hi Chris,

I am a regular user of the marine synoptic charts, most recently this summer on a Atlantic crossing on a Saga 43 sailboat and again from Portugal to the Canaries on a CS 40.

Typically I review them from shore when route planning and get the charts over the internet with a request to Sailmail. I then use these human generated forecasts for context when reviewing the computer generated Grib files (usually Predictwind) for the area of interest.

Once under way I use the SSB radio to get the radiofax in conjunction with the HF Fax app on my iPad and/or iPhone. The quality of these images varies from crystal clear to barely legible depending on location, time of day and propagation in general.

For the Atlantic crossing we had the luxury of an Iridium Go so we could make requests via Sattelite email requests to Sailmail. I continue to use the NOAA radiofax on the east side of the Atlantic as I find the presentation superior to the British and German versions. However, I believe the "on the hour" repeat of the basic synopsis by these agencies is something for NOAA to consider.

I tried requesting these directly from NOAA but for some unknown reason iPads and iPhones insert invisible characters into emails which fail to make it past the very strict rules for pure text at the NOAA portal. Surely in this world of smartphones the portal could be a bit more flexible.

I am a big fan of radiofax and hope that this continues to be available to mariners around the world. Thank you and your team for all your efforts to support maritime safety.

Sincerely

Daragh Nagle

1-250-415-7625

Charles Starke

Aug 24, 2022, 6:07 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Radio fax by SSB Chris Parker forecast by SSB Forecast charts

Best wishes, Charles Charles L Starke +1-914-391-1117 (C) https://www.amazon.com/Charles-L-Starke-MD/e/B07P93H85J

jean-pierre mamin

Aug 24, 2022, 6:31 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Hello,

I personally don't use them but know of several cruisers who do.

Best regards

David Burch

Aug 24, 2022, 6:37 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Hi Chris,

Thanks for the inquiry. I am happy to answer, as this is a topic we address in our text <u>Modern Marine Weather</u> and cover in our courses, now having trained some 35,000 mariners since 1980.

We do indeed use these charts, and rely on them in part to evaluate specific model forecasts. I discussed their use in a seminar not too long ago. The <u>annotated slides are</u> <u>here</u>, the actual <u>video of the talk is here</u>.

Most mariners we work with download these maps at sea by: (1) email request to Saildocs or to FTPmail (Sailodocs has the advantage of reducing the file size by a factor of two to save air time), (2) or from a direct link to the online source build into the navigation program such as Expedition or qtVlm. One click connects the nav program to the satcom, which downloads them and then presents them as georeferenced images right on the echart in use. Then a model forecast in grib format can be laid over that and interpolated to the right time and compared. Live buoy and ship reports are also over laid. (3) On most vessels we work with, traditional radiofax is a back up... but there are some recreational mariners sailing more on a budget that do rely on the radio fax and an SSB radio. Also my understanding is that many commercial vessels, including shipping and fishing, do still use the radiofax, but i do not have recent direct information on that. The shipping companies are often getting their routing and weather updates from a commercial service and i do not know why they would not get the maps the same way we do.

As we discuss in the text, radio fax is less dependable and more sensitive to maintance and tuning. We also point out that starting from an un-equipped boat, the sat phone set up is much less expensive and recommended. we only recommend the SSB radios for those who have a boat with an already working system. In that case it is an option or at least good backup to satcom. Also of note, the new StarLink internet at sea is in the process of having a huge impact on communications at sea. Their RV account works well now at low cost in coastal waters out 100+ nmi or so.

I hope that helps. In years past i took part in NOAA study groups and at the time strongly supported the radiofax, but this is becoming a weaker argument, frankly. Back then we could also place a call using SSB radio to a land line, but that seems largely gone now as far as i understand.

We have also stressed that the standard analysis and forecast maps are not adequate for planning around TS/TC and that your text data (advisories) and your probability plots are needed. We also look forward to the planned developments in the S-100/S-41x products that NOAA is working on.

Best regards,

— david

David Burch, PhD, FRIN <u>Starpath School of Navigation</u> Seattle, WA

David Burch

Aug 24, 2022, 6:37 PM (6 days ago)

to me

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Best regards,

— david

David Burch, PhD, FRIN <u>Starpath School of Navigation</u> Seattle, WA

From: Blair Teddy <<u>bteddy@foss.com</u>> Sent: Wednesday, August 24, 2022 3:54 PM To: Carl Obermeier <<u>cobermeier@foss.com</u>> Subject: RE: Questions regarding radiofax and marine analysis/forecast charts

Carl,

I will bullet-point my answers for clarity:

- Radiofax: most of the boats still have the equipment, but these are rarely utilized due to the age and reliability of the equipment, not the signal. I had one instance this whole year where the crew actually did use this due to a loss of internet connection for more than a couple of days.
- FTP Mail: Outside of a few deck officers that still do this, very few people know how or that it's available to code weather reports through FTP mail. I personally did not do this for the last 6-7 years of my time on the boats (I got off the boat 6 months ago)
- VHF 22A is still used pretty frequently.
- Sat-C weather alerts and forecasts are still used or at least printed regularly.
- NOAA reports are still used, but mostly by internet, which is getting more and more reliable.

Hope this helps.

Thanks, Blair

Blair Teddy | Port Captain - Oceans M: (425) 864-0979 bteddy@foss.com

313 East F St Tacoma, WA 98421

David Parker

Aug 24, 2022, 7:38 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Hi Chris,

We use TAFB forecast frequently. We access them through the websites. We do not use radio fax, we are just starting to utilize our SSB radio more, but internet is still our Go To source.

Thanks so much for all that you do!!!

Dave on Indigo Lady --Dave Parker 1 East St Somersworth, NH 03878

sgp.captainonduty13

Aug 24, 2022, 8:09 PM (6 days ago)

to me

Good evening!

We usually use information from the NOAA web sites below and find it very useful

https://ocean.weather.gov/Pac_tab.php

https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/

https://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/

Best Regards

Capt. Yehor KORNIYENKO CMA CGM Fleet Center - Singapore Group Operations Direct line: +65 6714 2383 VolP: 8669 2383 Mobile: +65 9118 7637 Generic Email: ho.fleet-navcenter@cma-cgm.com 9 North Buona Vista Drive #14-01 The Metropolis (Twr 1), S'pore 138588 Business website: www.cma-cgm.com Group website: www.cmacgm-group.com

Cui Qifa

Aug 24, 2022, 8:21 PM (6 days ago) to me

Dear Dr Chris Landsea

Good day,

Confirm marine analysist and forecast charts obtained via website and it is useful. When I was sailing, Radiofax is useful, but sometime the picture was not clear due to distance or machine defects

Best Regards!

Capt. Qifa Cui Deputy Operations Manager / Pacific Business Unit ZIM Integrated Shipping Services Ltd. / www.ZIM.com cui.qifa@zim.com / Office: +85225985889 / Mobile: +85265094505

stan@honeynav.com

Aug 24, 2022, 8:39 PM (6 days ago)

to Ken, me

Ken and Chris,

Many offshore sailors make extensive use of the fax weathermaps, particularly via the Ocean Prediction Center site: <u>https://ocean.weather.gov/Pac_tab.php</u> Many sailors also retrieve them from Saildocs or FTPmail. Radiofax is decreasingly common as fewer boats carry HF radios. But for those boats that do carry HF radios, radiofax is easy.

The NHC products are revered by sailors. Many sailors continue to be stunned by how good the NHC products have become in the last decade. Chris, thank you on behalf of all sailors for your efforts.

Cheers, Stan

 Stan Honey

 Honey Navigation
 www.honeynav.com

 US mobile
 +1 650 799 3428

 email
 stan@honeynav.com

Karen Prioleau

to me

Greetings and thank you for asking. We have used Radiofax and Satellite connection. Best regards, Karen Prioleau

Oliver Solanas Heinrichs

Aug 25, 2022, 7:46 AM (5 days ago)

to me

Dear Chris,

Our sailors at the Viking Explorers Rally mainly use the Iridium Go which is a good option for weather forecast together for example with Predictwind. There is an offshore app that compresses the data for your gripfiles.

Others, use only the Inreach, but here you only get "written forecasts". Radiofax is not used that much, and some use SSB radio with a pactom modem to download weather. But this is slow and better at night.

Hope this helps,

With kind regards Oliver --Oliver Solanas Heinrichs CEO-Founder 8islas Group Managing Director Viking Explorers skype: oliversolanas Tel: +34 695 978 711 (whatsapp only) www.8islas.com www.vikingexplorersrally.com Cruising Guide to the Canary Islands

Muise Marcel

Aug 25, 2022, 7:49 AM (5 days ago)

to me

Good morning Chris,

I've drive a desk now but most of my 20 years at sea we went online to <u>ocean.weather.gov</u> or the foreign equivalent. Every ship I sailed on after 2001 had internet. Although I loved playing with the radiofax, your website is just faster, instantly available, and more colorful.

Marcel

Marcel L. Muise Marine Casualty Investigator | Master Mariner National Transportation Safety Board Direct (202) 314-6012 | Mobile (202) 603-0355 marcel.muise@ntsb.gov

Saltzman Philip J NGA-AOCAT USA CIV

Aug 25, 2022, 8:15 AM (5 days ago)

to me

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Good morning Dr. Landsea,

The majority of our forecasting information are obtained through ftpmail. The second most used source is internet searches on the NOAA and commercial sites.

Best regards, Phil Saltzman

lee.johnson@q.com

Aug 25, 2022, 8:39 AM (5 days ago)

to me

Greetings, Dr. Landsea, and thank you for the question. I use NOAA 'weatherfax' products and consider them an essential part of the weather data available to me at sea. I obtain them as 'tif' files via email from <u>saildocs.com</u> using an ICOM 710RT SSB radio and a Pactor modem. The email to and from <u>saildocs.com</u> goes through the ground station network operated by SailMail.com. The equipment and software give me the ability to receive and view the radiofax products directly from the audio transmissions, but the email method is what I typically use because it is easier, faster, and uses less electrical power. That said, the availability of the radiofax transmissions is a welcome bit of redundancy.

As far as the products themselves go, I find them extremely useful and reliable. I particularly rely on the 24, 48, and 96 hours surface analyses and wind/wave forecasts.

Best regards,

Richard Madden

Aug 25, 2022, 11:17 AM (5 days ago)

to me

Good Day,

We obtain weather charts from NOAA OPC, WPC and NHC directly from the websites or FTPmail. We will frequently cross-reference these GRIB file downloads to a local player.

Kind regards,

Rich

Captain Richard Madden Maritime Safety Innovation Lab +1 315 269 9697