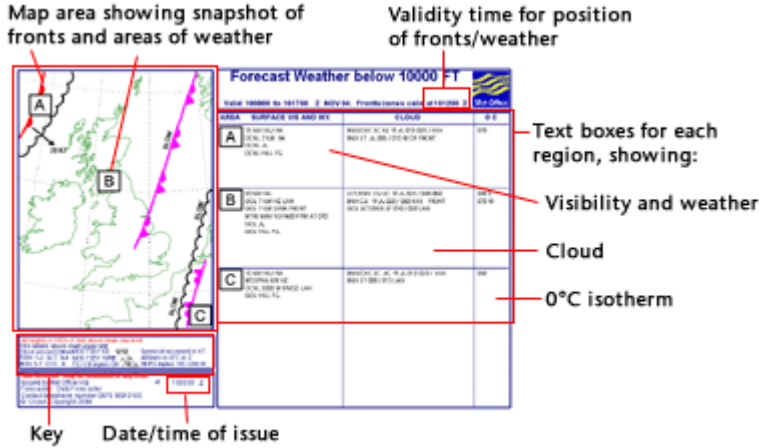




Details of the new briefing charts

UK and European low-level sig wx charts (F215 and F415)

A number of changes will be made to the UK and European low-level significant weather (Sig Wx) forecast charts (previously referred to as F215 and F415 respectively) from 14 March 2006.



Map area

The map area will still appear on the sig Wx chart showing a snapshot of the fronts and areas of weather at a specific validity time (VT) shown at the top right of the chart.

Only sig wx areas, fronts and speed of movement will be shown on the map area. The 0 °C isotherm boxes have been moved to the text box allocated to a particular area.

The 'top' of the chart will now be 10,000 ft instead of 15,000 ft.

See samples...

Weather

The text boxes on the right will show the weather for each area of the map and have been designed to follow the TAF code appearing in the same order; visibility and weather followed by cloud. The METAR weather codes will also be used in this section to refer to specific forecast weather types (e.g. TS, +RA, FG etc.)

Cloud

Cloud amount will be: FEW, SCT, BKN or OVC, followed by the cloud type (e.g. ST, CU, CB, SC, AC). An additional two symbols may then appear to indicate whether MOD/SEV ICE or TURB is expected in this cloud. A key to the symbols is included in the lower left corner of the chart.

Cloud heights then appear in 100s of feet in the form 020/050 (in this case the cloud base is 2,000 ft and the top 5,000 ft AMSL). If a cloud top is expected to extend above 10,000 ft then XXX will appear. For example, BKN/OVC STSC \Uparrow 008/060 indicates 5 - 8 oktas of stratus and strato-cumulus base 800 ft top 6,000 ft AMSL with moderate turbulence and moderate icing expected within.

Key:

MOD ICE	\Uparrow	Moderate icing
SEV ICE	\Uparrow	Severe icing
MOD TURB	\wedge	Moderate turbulence
SEV TURB	\wedge	Severe turbulence

Mountain wave

Wherever necessary, mountain wave forecasts will appear in the 'visibility and weather' box as MTW followed by a vertical speed VSP and height(s) above mean sea level.

e.g. 'MTW MAX VSP 700 FPM AT 080'. Mountain wave maximum vertical speed 700 ft per minute at 8,000 ft with moderate/severe turbulence expected

Abbreviations used in aviation forecasts and warnings

Issue/validity times

In order to meet customer requests, the chart times have been altered slightly to cover a nine-hour period instead of just six hours. Charts will be available at similar times to those currently in place. The table below summarises the times for the new charts:

Chart	Issue time	Valid for flights between	Validity time*	Outlook to	Prognosis
UK low-level sig weather (F215)	0330	0800 and 1700	1200	0000	1800
	0930	1400 and 2300	1800	0600	0000
	1530	2000 and 0500	0000	1200	0600
	2130	0200 and 1100	0600	1800	1200
European low-level sig weather (F415)	0330	0800 and 1700	1200	n/a	n/a
	0930	1400 and 2300	1800	n/a	n/a
	1530	2000 and 0500	0000	n/a	n/a

2130

0100 and 1100

0600

n/a

n/a

* Validity time is the time at which the position of the fronts and areas of weather are valid.

All times will remain in UTC (denoted by 'Z' or 'Zulu' on the new briefing charts).

Prognosis

The prognosis chart (forecast for six hours on) will no longer appear on the chart, but will be shown below the main F215 chart on the Met Office web site. This prognosis chart shows only the expected positions of the principal synoptic features and mean sea level isobars at the end of the period. Weather zones are not given on the prognosis chart.

UK and European spot winds charts (F214 and 414)

In response to customer requests, the Met Office has also agreed to change the chart validity times of the F214 and F414 spot winds charts in order to bring them into line with the new F215 and F415 Sig Wx charts. As a result, the spot wind charts will have improved issue times and validity times as set out in the table below:

Chart	Issue time	Valid for flights between	Validity time*	Outlook to
UK spot winds (F214)	0000	0300 and 0900	0600	n/a
	0600	0900 and 1500	1200	n/a
	1200	1500 and 2100	1800	n/a
	1800	2100 and 0300	0000	n/a
European spot winds (F414)	0000	0300 and 0900	0600	n/a
	0600	0900 and 1500	1200	n/a
	1200	1500 and 2100	1800	n/a
	1800	2100 and 0300	0000	n/a

Amendment of charts

Only the current chart will be amended, therefore a chart will be subject to amendment as soon as it has been issued.

Example for F215 and F415

If we consider three chart issues of F215/F415, the 0200 - 1100 chart issued at 2100, the 0800 - 1700 chart issued at 0300 and the 1400 - 2300 issued at 0900. If the actual weather were to change from the forecast weather at say, 1000 with un-forecast thunderstorms which are now forecast to last all day, the 0800 - 1700 chart would be amended instantly since this is the current chart. The previous chart valid 0200 - 1100 would not be amended since it is no longer current (even though it's period is unfinished). If forecasters believe that the thunderstorms will also affect the period 1400 - 2300, then this chart would also be amended.

Users are advised to use the latest chart wherever possible since this should include the most up-to-date information and amendments as necessary.

[Production cycle for F215 and F415](#)

[Production cycle for F214 and F414](#)

Feedback

Any feedback should be passed directly to the CAA at metauthority@dap.caa.co.uk.

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