

the publication of the amended final results, we discovered a ministerial error with regard to the weighted-average margins published for FAG Italia S.p.A. in the Italian case. Specifically, for this company we published the weighted-average margins from prior remand results. The final weighted-average margins for FAG Italia S.p.A. were established in *FAG Kugelfischer Georg Schafer KgaA., FAG Italia S.p.A., FAG (U.K.) Limited, Barden Corporation Limited, FAG Bearings Corporation and The Barden Corporation v. United States*, Slip Op. 96-108 (July 10, 1996). The Court of International Trade affirmed those rates on December 12, 1996.

Amendment to Final Results

In accordance with section 735(e) of the Act, we are now amending the final results of administrative reviews of the antidumping duty orders on antifriction bearings (other than tapered roller bearings) and parts thereof from Italy for the period May 1, 1991, through April 30, 1992. The revised weighted-average margin is as follows:

Company	BBs	CRBs
FAG Italia S.p.A.	5.19	21.90

Accordingly, the Department will determine and the Customs Service will assess appropriate antidumping duties on entries of the subject merchandise made by FAG Italia S.p.A. Individual differences between United States price and foreign market value may vary from the percentages listed above. The Department will issue appraisal instructions to the Customs Service after publication of these amended final results of reviews.

We are issuing and publishing this determination in accordance with sections 751(h) and 777(i) of the Act and 19 CFR 353.28(c).

Dated: December 14, 1998.

Robert S. LaRussa,

Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.

[FR Doc. 98-33606 Filed 12-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A-122-830, A-475-822, A-580-831, A-791-805, A-583-830]

Postponement of Final Antidumping Determinations: Stainless Steel Plate in Coils From Canada, Italy, Republic of Korea, South Africa and Taiwan

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Helen Kramer or Linda Ludwig, Import Administration, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20230; telephone (202) 482-0405 or (202) 482-3833, respectively.

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 18, 1998.

The Applicable Statute

Unless otherwise indicated, all citations to the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended ("the Act"), are references to the provisions effective January 1, 1995, the effective date of the amendments made to the Act by the Uruguay Round Agreements Act ("URAA"). In addition, all citations to the Department's regulations are to the regulations at 19 CFR part 351 (1998).

Postponement of Final Determinations

The Department received requests pursuant to section 735(a)(2) of the Act to postpone its final determination to 135 days after publication of the Department's preliminary determination from the following producers/exporters of the subject merchandise:

- September 30, 1998—Yieh United Steel Corp. (Taiwan)
- October 29, 1998—Pohang Iron and Steel Co., Ltd. (Korea)
- November 2, 1998—Atlas Stainless Steels (Sammi Atlas) (Canada).

In November 1998, these respondents amended their requests to include a concurrent extension of the provisional measures (i.e., suspension of liquidation) for the same period, in accordance with the Department's regulations (19 CFR 351.210(e)(2)). The following additional respondents also requested postponement and extension of the provisional measures:

- November 5, 1998—Columbus Stainless (South Africa)
- November 16, 1998—Acciai Speciali Terni S.p.A.; Acciai Speciali Terni USA, Inc. (Italy).

In addition, on November 4, 1998, petitioners requested postponement of the final determination for 60 days if the preliminary determination with respect

to Taiwan is amended and results in a negative determination. On November 27, 1998, the amended preliminary determination was signed but continued to be affirmative. Therefore, in accordance with 19 CFR 351.210(b)(2)(ii), because (1) our preliminary determinations are affirmative, (2) respondents requesting a postponement account for a significant proportion of exports from their respective countries of the subject merchandise, and (3) no compelling reasons for denial exist, we are granting the respondents' requests and are postponing the final determinations to no later than March 19, 1999, which is 135 days after the publication of the preliminary determinations. See Notice of Preliminary Determination of Sales at Less than Fair Value: Stainless Steel Plate in Coils from Canada, 63 FR 59527; Notice of Preliminary Determination of Sales at Less than Fair Value: Stainless Steel Plate in Coils from Italy, 63 FR 59530; Notice of Preliminary Determination of Sales at Less than Fair Value: Stainless Steel Plate in Coils from the Republic of Korea, 63 FR 59535; Notice of Preliminary Determination of Sales at Less than Fair Value: Stainless Steel Plate in Coils from South Africa, 63 FR 59540; and Notice of Preliminary Determination of Sales at Less than Fair Value: Stainless Steel Plate in Coils from Taiwan, 63 FR 59524 (November 4, 1998). Suspension of liquidation will be extended accordingly.

This notice of postponement is published pursuant to 19 CFR 351.210(g).

Dated: December 11, 1998.

Robert S. LaRussa,

Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.

[FR Doc. 98-33605 Filed 12-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Weather Service Modernization and Associated Restructuring

AGENCY: National Weather Service (NWS), NOAA, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of final Certification of no degradation in service for the Combined Consolidation and/or Automation and Closure of 52 Weather Service Offices (WSO).

SUMMARY: On November 30, 1998, the Under Secretary for Oceans and

Atmosphere approved and transmitted 21 office consolidation, 51 office automation, and 52 office closure certifications to Congress. Pub. L. 102-567 requires such final certifications of no degradation in service be published in the **Federal Register**. This notice is intended to satisfy the requirements of Public Law 102-567.

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 18, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the final certification packages should be sent to Tom Beaver, Room 11426, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Beaver at 301-713-0300 ext. 141.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Charleston, West Virginia, Automation and Closure certifications were proposed in the January 7, 1997, **Federal Register**, and the 60-day public comment period closed on March 10, 1997. No public comments were received. The following certifications were proposed in the April 11, 1997, **Federal Register** and the 60-day public comment period closed on June 10, 1997.

Bridgeport, CT—Automation/Closure
 Indianapolis, IN—Automation/Closure
 Kansas City MO—Automation/Closure
 Lansing, MI—Automation/Closure
 Lincoln, NE—Automation/Closure
 Louisville, KY—Automation/Closure
 Milwaukee, WI—Automation/Closure
 Newark, NJ—Automation/Closure
 Rockford, IL—Automation/Closure
 Abilene, TX—Consolidation
 International Falls, MN—Consolidation
 Madison, WI—Consolidation/
 Automation/Closure
 Peoria, IL—Consolidation/Automation/
 Closure
 Rochester, NY—Consolidation/
 Automation/Closure
 Tucson, AZ—Consolidation/
 Automation/Closure

Six public comments were received pertaining to WSO International Falls, Minnesota, and two pertaining to WSO Lincoln, Nebraska. These comments and the NWS response are set forth here for reference.

Comments on International Falls: 1. A public comment from Gary Davison, City Clerk, International Falls stated, "The City had fought for years to keep the weather station here, because there was a large concern the forecasts would not be accurate from Duluth. The City had legislators supporting them for the same reason, and we are very disappointed with the final consolidation, and as expected, the forecasts are not accurate at all. We have a large vacation area here and it is very

disappointing that the forecasts are so unreliable."

2. A public comment from Tom West, President, International Falls Chamber of Commerce. His comments included the following, "* * * NEXRAD coverage over Int'l Falls and the north central portion of Minnesota is at and beyond the extreme limit of NEXRAD capabilities. NWS maps indicate that Int'l Falls is barely in the 10,000 ft. coverage level and areas west of Int'l Falls and east of Lake of the Woods are not covered at this level at all. Considering that much of our severe weather comes from the northwest, and the large bodies of water heavily used for recreational purposes are within that area, it is critical to upgrade rather than degrade weather services." Although not relevant to this consolidation certification, he also commented that the Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) was unreliable and that the trained contract observers were "at a level well below that which has been provided in the past."

3. A public comment from Paul Nevanen, Director, Minnesota Cold Weather Resource Center. His comments included much of the same information about NEXRAD as stated by Tom West plus he added, "Also, during winter severe events, many significant types of weather develop below the 10,000 foot threshold. This is compounded by the fact that the Duluth NWS office was originally to be staffed by 10 forecasters. This level of staffing has not been [sic: been] met and the current level of 6 will be strained during the severe weather season. * * * This is the only area east of the Rocky Mountains that is not covered at the 10,000 foot threshold." He also included comments on perceived problems with ASOS which are not relevant to the consolidation certification.

4. The fourth public comment was from Jack E. Murray, Mayor, International Falls. Like the previous two comments Mr. Murray commented on lack of NEXRAD coverage and lack of full staffing at Duluth. He added, "I can tell you that the NWS no longer has the confidence that existed in this area for so many years. * * * There were a lot of promises made about the capabilities of the modernization. We certainly haven't seen this effect in our area."

5. The Honorable Irv Anderson, State Representative, Minnesota House of Representatives was the fifth commentator. Mr. Anderson's comments included, "By not providing the radar coverage level the rest of the country receives (most of the country enjoys multiple radar coverage) compounded

by removing trained NWS personnel constitutes a degradation of service.

* * * The modernization process has been one which seems to be filled with antagonism, when, in fact we are both seeking the same goal—better, more technologically advanced weather services for all our citizens. The NWS has set criteria, sited offices and radar units, but has never successfully addressed the concerns of the taxpayers of the northern border area of Minnesota. * * * I urge the National Weather Service to work with the people of northern Minnesota to correct this oversight by maintaining a 24 hour NWS manned station in International Falls and siting a NEXRAD unit there."

6. The sixth public comment was from James A. Sanders, Acting Superintendent, Voyager National Park, International Falls. He states, "Since the closure of the International Falls Weather Service Station, we have not had a reliable forecast for our local conditions or the approach of severe weather from the northwest. The safety of visitors, residents, and employees has been directly dependent on the International Falls Weather Service Station. The relocation of their duties to Fargo and Duluth has drastically reduced the reliability and accuracy of the local forecasts [sic: forecasts] we receive and increased the risk to all people working and enjoying the outdoors in this area."

NWS Response: NWS agrees WSR-88D coverage is about 10,000 feet in northwest Minnesota. International Falls was one of the 32 areas of concern that was studied by the Secretary's Report Team. The Team concluded, "* * * that there is no degradation in radar coverage in the International Falls area as a result of the NWS Modernization. Coverage from surrounding WSR-88Ds in Duluth and Grand Forks will provide radar data for the International Falls area which is equivalent or better to the current radar information available from the Duluth WSR-74C and the Fargo WSR-74S."

The Duluth office is currently (July 1997) staffed with the required forecasters and supervisors for Stage 1 operations. Five additional forecasters will be added in 1998 when Duluth receives its Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS). (AWIPS was installed in January 1998 and the 5 additional forecasters were in place in March 1998.)

The Duluth office is working closely with the U.S. Park Service (USPS) to improve forecasts and warning products for Voyageur's National Park (VNP). The forecasts for this area have always been prepared by the Duluth office and

consolidating the warning services from international Falls to the Duluth office has had no impact on the forecasts. Additional effort and coordination with personnel from VNP continues. On July 11, 1997, the acting Meteorologist in Charge (MIC) and the Weather Coordination Officer traveled to VNP and met with USPS staff. The following actions were initiated.

(a) NWS and USPS will work together to improve the reception of NOAA Weather Radio in the park. Currently, the eastern portion of the park is beyond the effective range of the current antenna. The USPS is looking into "gifting" a transmitter to the NWS. This transmitter would be located in VNP.

(b) NWS will continue the lake wind study to improve forecasts in the future.

(c) The Duluth Fire Weather Forecaster will coordinate with the Canada's atmospheric Environmental Scientists (AES) fire weather forecaster for the region.

(d) The Duluth office will obtain all available surface weather observations in the VNP area. A new observation was initiated at the Visitors Center providing information in a data-void area. (Local products began including specific reference to VNP on September 2, 1998.)

(e) NWS will continue to pursue the acquisition of radar data from Canada's AES to supplement the data from the NEXRAD Weather Service Office Duluth WSR-88D. (Duluth began receiving Canadian radar data on October 2, 1998.)

Addendum to Reply: AWIPS was installed at the future Duluth Weather Forecast Office (WFO) on January 9, 1998, and is operating using Build 3.0 software. Currently (February 1998), all but two senior meteorologists required for modernized operations are in place at Duluth. The two senior meteorologists have been selected and one is scheduled to arrive on March 1 and the second will arrive at Duluth on March 15, 1998, (Both were in place on March 15, 1998). Current (January 1998) meteorologist staffing at Duluth consists of:

- 1 Meteorologist in Charge,
- 1 Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM),
- 1 Science and Operations Officer (SOO),
- 3 Senior Meteorologists (remaining 2 were in place on March 15, 1998),
- 3 Journey Level Meteorologists, and
- 2 Meteorologist Interns (MI),
- 11 Meteorologists + 2 more on March 15, 1998, = total 13.

The remaining staff includes:

- 1 Data Acquisition Program Manager,
- 4 Hydrometeorological Technicians,
- 1 Electronic Systems Analyst,

- 2 Electronics Technicians, and
- 1 Administrative Assistant.

Comments on Lincoln, Nebraska: Two public comments were received, one from Mr. Les Myers, Jr. and a second from Mr. William E. Whitney. A public comment from Les Myers, Jr., Lincoln-Lancaster County Emergency Services, stated his concern over the "closing of any National Weather Service Offices." He said it was his opinion services had "deteriorated tremendously since the closing of the Lincoln Weather Service office and the transfer of responsibility to the Omaha office located in Valley, Nebraska." Mr. Myers listed several instances where warnings had been issued without previous watches and identified notification problems to emergency services by stating, "I found that long-standing policies have become unknown recently." He concluded with, "Service in severe weather situations has deteriorated measurably to Lincoln and Lancaster County and the above information testifies to that fact."

NWS Response: The MIC of the Omaha NEXRAD Weather Service Forecast Office (NWSFO) arranged for the Emergency Managers to visit NWSFO Omaha and for key members of NWSFO Omaha to visit the Lincoln-Lancaster County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

—June 24, 1997, Carol Whitfoth, Assistant Coordinator of Lincoln-Lancaster County Emergency Services visited and received a briefing and tour of the NWSFO Omaha facility.

—June 30, 1997, NWSFO Omaha personnel, Steve Byrd (SOO), Brian Smith (WCM), and David Theophilus (MIC) visited and received a briefing and toured the EOC.

—July 9, 1997, Les Myers, Jr., and Jason Orth from EOC visited, received a briefing, and toured NWSFO Omaha.

The results of these meetings were positive, gave each of the office staffs a better appreciation for the operations at the other office, and resolved the communications problems. The issuance of tornado warnings for specific parts of the counties and the actual dividing lines to split the counties into sections (i.e., northeast Lancaster, southern Lincoln, etc.) were reviewed and agreed upon. Both parties agreed to work more closely together to ensure proper and timely issuance of severe weather statements to the public. Dave Theophilus (MIC) asked if a member of NWSFO Omaha could be included on the County Disaster Committee. EOC personnel said they would consider the offer. These coordination meetings have already paid dividends. On July 8, 1997, Steve

Byrd (SOO) had given Mr. Myers advance notice of possible non-supercell funnel clouds in Lancaster County. Mr. Myers said he really appreciated the call. Both agencies are satisfied the previously identified problems have been resolved and the agencies are working together to ensure timely relay of severe weather information.

A second public comment from William Whitney, Assistant Director State of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), said, "This closure plus other features of the National Weather Service (NWS) modernization in Nebraska has caused a significant degradation of service * * *". Mr. Whitney described several misunderstood aspects of the modernization. First, he did not understand what services would be provided from the Omaha office when WSO Lincoln was "automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level B," nor did he understand "the relationship between the current Valley WSO and the Omaha WFO." Second, the modernization is not as responsive as the previous organization when "one meteorologist was responsible for forecasting warning and preparedness throughout the State." Currently, "we are forced to coordinate statewide matters with as many as six individual WSOs." Third, "The Valley WSO originally was built in the Lower Platte River 100 year flood plain contrary to Presidential Executive Order 11988." Fourth, "After several years we still cannot understand why it is "better" to deal with four different hydrologists especially when their areas of responsibility do not correspond to our river basins." Finally, WSO Lincoln used to advise us directly when severe weather was forecast or imminent and this was continued by the Valley office but we are now told that NWS "can no longer provide this service."

NWS Response: Further discussion and communication with Mr. Whitney have clarified any misunderstandings. Automation at FAA Weather Observation Service Level B means the ASOS will provide the primary observations and be backed up by observer trained FAA personnel at Lincoln. These individuals also are responsible for augmenting the ASOS observations for: Thunderstorm occurrence, tornadic activity, hail, virga, volcanic ash, tower visibility, long-line runway visual range, freezing drizzle, ice pellets, snow depth on ground, snow increasing rapidly remark, thunderstorm/lightning location remark, and observed significant weather not at station. The official name of the office

is Omaha although the office is actually located at Valley, Nebraska. The Omaha office started as a WSFO, then became a NWSFO when the WSR-88D was declared operational and will be a WFO after AWIPS becomes operational. There are six WCMs in Nebraska, each with a designated area of responsibility. One WCM is responsible for coordinating activities and coordinating with the NEMA. During siting of the office, NWS believed construction of the Union Dike would remove the area from the flood plain. Unfortunately this did not occur. However, the office has been elevated three feet above the 100-year flood level. Although there are four hydrologists spread among the six weather offices, two hydrologists are responsible for 88 of the 93 counties in Nebraska. In 1997, NWSFO Sioux Falls provided information about the Missouri River upstream from Gavins Point Dam that had not been available in prior years. NWSFO Omaha ensured this information reached NEMA. NWS will continue to work with NEMA to ensure river basin responsibility matches closely with county areas of responsibility and simplify notification of flood events. To be effective, communication of severe weather events to emergency management agencies must be rapid and reliable. On March 10, 1997, Dave Theophilus (MIC) met with Mr. Whitney and his staff to discuss severe weather warning notification, and especially after hours notification. They developed several ways to better distribute the required information. NEMA agreed to adopt a paging system and NWS personnel agreed to continue the present coordination method indefinitely. NWS believes all issues have been resolved.

The Modernization Transition Committee (MTC) at its June 25, 1997, meeting concluded these actions would not result in any degradation of service and endorsed the certifications.

The following certifications were proposed in the July 14, 1997, **Federal Register** and the 60-day public comment period closed on September 12, 1997.

Colorado Springs, CO—Automation/
Closure
Des Moines, IA—Automation/Closure
Dubuque, IA—Automation/Closure
Elkins, WV—Automation/Closure
Las Vegas, NV—Automation/Closure
Minneapolis, MN—Automation/Closure
Portland, OR—Automation/Closure
San Francisco, CA—Automation/
Closure
Spokane, WA—Automation/Closure
Casper, WY—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Huron, SD—Consolidation/Automation/
Closure

Rochester, MN—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Waterloo, IA—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Yakima, WA—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Yuma, AZ—Closure

No negative public comments were received. The MTC, at its September 24, 1997, meeting, concluded these actions would not result in any degradation of service and endorsed the certifications.

The following certifications were proposed in the October 2, 1997, **Federal Register** and the 60-day public comment period closed on December 1, 1997.

Abilene, TX—Automation/Closure
Concordia, KS—Automation/Closure
Ely, NV—Automation/Closure
Havre, MT—Automation/Closure
International Falls, MN—Automation/
Closure
Santa Maria, CA—Automation/Closure
Tupelo, MS—Automation/Closure
Valentine, NE—Automation/Closure
Wichita Falls, TX—Automation/Closure
Winnemucca, NV—Automation/Closure
Alamosa, CO—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Alpena, MI—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Houghton Lake, MI—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Kalispell, MT—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Lander, WY—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Norfolk, NE—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Sault Ste Marie, MI—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Scottsbluff, NE—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
Sheridan, WY—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure
St. Cloud, MN—Consolidation/
Automation/Closure

One negative public comment was received for each Alamosa, Alpena, Houghton Lake, Kalispell, Norfolk, and St. Cloud. Fourteen public comments were received for Valentine. These comments and the NWS responses are set forth here for reference.

Comment on Alamosa, Colorado: One public comment received from Mr. Steven E. Vandiver, Division Engineer, Division of Water Resources, Water Division Three. Mr. Vandiver's comments were mainly concerned with what he felt to be a lack of complete radar coverage. His comments included, "There has historically been a NWS office at the Bergman Field Airport in Alamosa * * * and service is now provided out of Pueblo, Colorado. I do not feel that product is necessarily

better than what has historically been available from staff locally just because of the modernization * * *. The ring of mountains which surround this intermountain region do not allow the radars to pick up most storms. We have had increasing numbers of unusual weather, including tornadoes, funnel clouds, hail events, and severe windstorms. At least when personnel were stationed at the NWS office here, they could give visual reports of these events and worked closely with observers to give timely updated data * * *. The area that is missed by the three radars, even as evidenced by the coverage maps, is one of the highest precipitation areas in the Rocky Mountain range. Our agency uses rainfall and snowfall data to forecast resulting runoff and flooding possibilities * * *. These comments are by no means a reflection of the excellent staff and their efforts in the Pueblo NWS office. Bill Fortune and his crew have bent over backwards to serve this area and provide the best information possible. They have generated special products to meet specific needs of our agency and have done an excellent job."

NWS Response: NWS agrees the NEXRAD coverage is not complete over south-central Colorado. However, when compared to the pre-modernized coverage, the NEXRAD coverage from three radars in Colorado is improved over the single pre-modernized radar located near Limon. Warning verification statistics for severe weather show improvement. For severe weather, the probability of detection improved from 4 percent pre-modernized, to 42 percent under modernization. The Pueblo office is developing new products to meet customer needs. We are confident these new products will continue to improve with the modernization.

Comment on Alpena, Michigan: One public comment received from Mr. Jeff Welch, President, Welch Aviation. Mr. Welch stated, "I am not in favor of the Alpena, MI (APN) ASOS being certified * * *. In the interest of flight safety, I respectfully request that you do not certify the ASOS at Alpena, MI." In between, he listed a series of ASOS observations which resulted in a missed approach.

NWS Response: NWS reviewed the ASOS performance with Mr. Welch. He agreed the ASOS was performing accurately and all current information was available on the ground-to-air (GTA) radio. NWS provided Mr. Welch with more information on how to obtain weather via the GTA radio and an explanation about the additional meteorological discontinuity sensor.

Comment on Houghton Lake, Michigan: One public comment was received from Mr. Robert E. Howey concerning access to NEXRAD data from the Grand Rapids WSR-88D. Mr. Howey stated, "The Modernization Transition Committee can rest assured that my concern was addressed by the Meteorologist In Charge at the Grand Rapids office, but my concerns were certainly not resolved. The Grand Rapids' web page for radar coverage refers to the *National Weather Service Policy and Guidelines on Server Content for Internet Use*. Upon deciphering the reference, we users discover that our only access to NEXRAD weather radar coverage of our country is through something called UCAR. Whatever or wherever that is, it is slower and more prone to interruption than if I could be accessing the splendid radar information being collected and distributed by Grand Rapids station, which incidentally, displays a pleasingly high degree of excellence."

NWS Response: The NWS advised Mr. Hawley distribution of NEXRAD data was available through any of four NEXRAD Information Dissemination Service (NIDS) vendors.

Comment on Kalispell, MT: One public comment was received from Monte M. Eliason, Airport Manager, Flathead Municipal Airport Authority. Mr. Eliason's comments included, "As we have previously documented and stated, and ASOS cannot replace a manned weather service office without serious degradation of service. The government is wrong by any measure in a finding otherwise. The terminal area reports by ASOS, frequently lack the timely accuracy and broader picture of approaching weather such as thunderstorms, freezing rain, or area mountaintop obscuration."

NWS Response: NWS reviewed ASOS performance at Kalispell and determined it met specified standards. During the last year there have been 35 ASOS outages, and average repair times have been 15 minutes. Both the freezing rain sensor and the lightning sensor are operational. Video cameras were installed in June 1997 to visually depict local conditions, including the mountain obscurations. Forecasters have access to the video camera displays, and the images are also available on the Internet. Airport service level classifications were determined by the FAA. Kalispell was designated as a Service Level D site meaning it can operate with a stand-alone ASOS.

In the summer of 1997, the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association Air Safety Foundation (ASF) requested

information from a random selection of pilots living in proximity to 25 service level D ASOS sites. The data collection was to determine pilot acceptance and use of ASOS. Requests were mailed to 10,000 pilots, and 1,027 responses were received.

Final conclusions of the ASF study, endorsed by the MTC, were that ASOS is representative and meets the needs of the identified service level D sites without degrading services.

Comment on Norfolk, Nebraska: One public comment was received from the Norfolk Airport Authority and was signed by Doris A. Kingsbury, Chairman; Gerald Arkfeld, Vice Chairman; Robert L. Carlisle, Secretary; Daniel E. Geary, Member; and Charles W. Balsiger, Member. They objected to the proposed automation. Their comments included, "The Norfolk Airport Authority strongly objects to the National Weather Service proposal to certify the automation of surface observations at Karl Stefan Memorial Airport, Norfolk, NE."

1. The system still makes significant errors regarding ceiling and visibility which must be corrected by the contract observer.

2. The system does not detect and reliably report freezing precipitation.

3. The system does not reliably report thunderstorms.

4. The system cannot detect and report rapidly changing local adverse weather conditions.

5. No provision has been identified for backup observations should the system fail, which would render the airport unusable to FAR Part 121 and 135 air carriers.

We fail to see how the system as it presently exists can be considered "equal or better service" and we further fail to see how this can be considered a safety enhancement to aviation. The previous system of human observers had no problem dealing with weather observations especially as regards rapidly changing weather events. From an aviation standpoint, the present system is poor at best. The augmentation of the system by contract observers makes the system acceptable, since there is a good chance that between the system and the contract observer the reported weather will be fairly accurate."

NWS Response: In the summer of 1997, the ASF requested information from a random selection of pilots living in proximity to 25 service level D ASOS sites. The data collection was to determine pilot acceptance and use of ASOS. Requests were mailed to 10,000 pilots, and 1,027 responses were received.

Final conclusions of the ASF study, endorsed by the MTC, were that ASOS is representative and meets the needs of the identified service level D sites without degrading services.

Comment on St. Cloud, Minnesota: One public comment was received from Brian D. Ryks, A.A.E., Airport Manager, St. Cloud Regional Airport. Mr. Ryks stated, "Although the ASOS has been fairly reliable during good weather conditions, there have been numerous occasions when outages have occurred or data recorded by the System has not been accurate during adverse weather. Fortunately, during these periods, augmentation from weather observers stationed at the Airport have prevented a loss of air service for our users. It is critical we maintain an augmented system consisting of both observers and the ASOS. An augmented system will ensure the highest degree of safety and reliability available to the traveling public and users of the airport."

NWS Response: NWS reviewed ASOS performance at St. Cloud and determined it met specified standards. Airport service level classifications were determined by the FAA. St. Cloud was designated as a Service Level D site which means it can operate with a stand alone-ASOS.

In the summer of 1997, the ASF requested information from a random selection of pilots living in proximity to 25 service level D ASOS sites. The data collection was to determine pilot acceptance and use of ASOS. Requests were mailed to 10,000 pilots, and 1,027 responses were received.

Final conclusions of the ASF study, endorsed by the MTC, were that ASOS is representative and meets the needs of the identified service level D sites without degrading services.

Comments on Valentine, Nebraska: Fourteen public comments were received concerning the automation certification of WSO Valentine, Nebraska. Eleven of the letters were exactly the same and the comments from those letters included, "Due to government cut backs in spending, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the National Weather Service (NWS), has decided not to man Automated Surface Observing Systems (ASOS) stations around the U.S. except those with towers. Augmentation of the Valentine ASOS station has proven to be essential to pilots flying into the area. People who have landed at the Valentine airport have expressed their appreciation to the airport officials for having a manned sight at Miller Field due to the isolation of the area. There have been instances of the ASOS reporting total overcast skies and

low landing minimums, deterring flights from landing, when there were only scattered skies that happened to be over the sensors, or reversely, not reporting very low landing minimums causing aircraft to fly into dangerous situations. Now, not only do we have to worry about such inaccuracies in landing minimums, but the newly installed, untested, Thunderstorm sensor is a concern * * *. Many doctors who serve this area fly into Valentine to provide much needed health care and training * * *. What cut in spending is so imperative that it should jeopardize peoples lives * * *." One letter included 14 signatures which in part stated, "The community of Valentine protests the full automation of service which the FAA and NWS feel can be observed from North Platte, Ne. will not work."

A public comment from Curtis Price, Jr., President, C. Price & Associates stated, "C. Price & Associates is the current contractor for the weather observation support services at Miller Field, Valentine Nebraska. We would like to register a protest against the proposed Recommendation for Automation and Closure of this site * * * it has been our experience that the current method of taking readings is far superior to the proposed ASOS method. We have documented several instances at other sites, where the ASOS system has been inadequate * * *." Finally, a public comment from Dean Jacobs, Executive Director, Valentine Chamber of Commerce stated, "* * * We consider augmentation of the Valentine ASOS station essential * * *. The people of this area need and deserve the most accurate weather reports for their safety and the safety of their passengers. The very reason for PL 102-567 (the weather service modernization bill), which protects weather stations from degradation [sic: from degradation] of service * * *."

NWS Response: NWS reviewed ASOS performance at Valentine and determined it met specified standards. The thunderstorm sensor is operational. Airport service level classifications were determined by the FAA. Valentine was designated as a service level D site meaning it can operate with a stand-alone ASOS.

In the summer of 1997, the (ASF) requested information from a random selection of pilots living in proximity to 25 service level D ASOS sites. The data collection was to determine pilot acceptance and use of ASOS. Requests were mailed to 10,000 pilots, and 1,027 responses were received.

Final conclusions of the ASF study, endorsed by the MTC, were that ASOS is representative and meets the needs of the identified service level D sites without degrading services.

The MTC, at its December 10, 1997, meeting, concluded these actions would not result in any degradation of service and endorsed the certifications.

The Astoria, Oregon, and Lexington, Kentucky, Automation and Closure Certifications were proposed in the January 9, 1998, **Federal Register**, and the 60-day public comment period closed on March 10, 1998. No public comments were received for Lexington. The MTC, at its March 18, 1998, meeting, concluded these actions would not result in any degradation of service and endorsed the certifications. Three public comments were received for Astoria. These comments and the NWS response are set forth here for reference.

Comments on Astoria, OR: Three public comments were applicable to the proposed Astoria automation and closure certification.

First, a letter dated April 24, 1997, was received from the Columbia River Pilots. The letter states, "The proposed closure of the Astoria weather station will degrade the quality of available weather information and hamper our ability to provide safe and timely service to vessels calling in the Columbia River at both Oregon and Washington ports."

Second, a letter dated June 3, 1997, was received from Representative Elizabeth Furse stating, "Enclosed is a copy of Senate Concurrent Resolution 8, recently adopted by both the Senate and the House of the Oregon legislature which requests that closure proceedings of the station be reversed."

Third, a letter dated January 29, 1998, signed by Ron Larsen, Airport manager; George Waer, Columbia River Bar Pilots; and John Raichl, Clatsop County Sheriff, commented on their concerns about the ASOS. They stated, "The Portland office has been helpful and concerned. They established a working relationship with the Columbia River Bar Pilots that seems to meet the Bar Pilots needs. In addition they placed remote cameras on the airport to help observe actual conditions that ASOS may or may not report. However, ASOS is still reporting conditions that are not accurate over the entire airport caused by the lack of remote sensors."

NWS Response: At a March 18, 1998, meeting, the NWS advised the MTC it had worked with the Bar Pilots and all issues were resolved. Additional communications links to the Portland office have been established with the Astoria community. NWS reported

ASOS system limitations will not permit the addition of a second set of discontinuity sensors as requested by the Astoria airport manager. The MTC directed NWS to compare the number of surface observation remarks for a 1-year period before ASOS was installed to the number of remarks for a 1-year period after ASOS and its discontinuity sensor was installed.

At the June 18, 1998, meeting, NWS presented results of the comparisons to the MTC. The comparison showed more remarks have been reported with ASOS than prior to ASOS. The comparison also showed the ASOS ceiling discontinuity sensor is located in the proper quadrant to detect lower ceilings. However, the visibility discontinuity sensor would be more effective if moved to the northeast quadrant. The ASOS permits splitting of the ceiling and visibility discontinuity sensors. This option was offered to the airport manager, but he prefers to keep both discontinuity sensors together in the northwest quadrant. After reviewing the before and after comparison, the MTC concluded there was no safety impact to aviation operations at the airfield, and the current ASOS and discontinuity sensor provided an accurate observation for the airfield.

The Honolulu Automation and Closure certifications were proposed in the April 9, 1998, **Federal Register**, and the 60-day public comment period closed on June 8, 1998. No public comments were received for Honolulu. The MTC, at its June 18, 1998, meeting concluded these Astoria and Honolulu actions would not result in any degradation of service and endorsed the certifications.

After consideration of the public comments received and the MTC endorsements, the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere approved these 52 combined consolidation and/or automation and closure certifications finding there would not be any degradation of service. The Under Secretary transmitted a list of the approved certifications to Congress on November 30, 1998. Certification approval authority was delegated from the Secretary of Commerce to the Under Secretary in June 1996. The NWS is now completing the certification requirements of Public Law 102-567 by publishing this notice of the final consolidation and/or automation and closure certifications in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: December 14, 1998.

John J. Kelly, Jr.,

Assistant Administrator for Weather Services.

[FR Doc. 98-33551 Filed 12-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-KE-M

COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Announcement of Import Limits and Guaranteed Access Levels for Certain Cotton, Wool and Man-Made Fiber Textile Products Produced or Manufactured in Costa Rica

December 14, 1998.

AGENCY: Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

ACTION: Issuing a directive to the Commissioner of Customs establishing limits and guaranteed access levels.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Naomi Freeman, International Trade Specialist, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482-4212. For information on the quota status of these limits, refer to the Quota Status Reports posted on the bulletin boards of each Customs port, call (202) 927-5850, or refer to the U.S. Customs website at <http://www.customs.ustreas.gov>. For information on embargoes and quota re-openings, call (202) 482-3715.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: Section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended.

The import restraint limits and Guaranteed Access Levels (GALs) for textile products, produced or manufactured in Costa Rica and exported during the period January 1, 1999 through December 31, 1999 are based on limits notified to the Textiles Monitoring Body pursuant to the Uruguay Round Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC).

In the letter published below, the Chairman of CITA directs the Commissioner of Customs to establish limits and guaranteed access levels for 1999. The limit for Category 443 has been reduced for carryforward applied in 1998.

A description of the textile and apparel categories in terms of HTS numbers is available in the CORRELATION: Textile and Apparel Categories with the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (see **Federal Register** notice 61 FR 66057,

published on December 17, 1997).

Information regarding the 1999 CORRELATION will be published in the **Federal Register** at a later date.

Requirements for participation in the Special Access Program are available in **Federal Register** notice 63 FR 16474, published on April 3, 1998.

Troy H. Cribb,

Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements

December 14, 1998.

Commissioner of Customs,
Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC 20229.

Dear Commissioner: Pursuant to section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended; and the Uruguay Round Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC), you are directed to prohibit, effective on January 1, 1999, entry into the United States for consumption and withdrawal from warehouse for consumption of cotton, wool and man-made fiber textile products in the following categories, produced or manufactured in Costa Rica and exported during the twelve-month period beginning on January 1, 1999 and extending through December 31, 1999, in excess of the following restraint limits:

Category	Twelve-month limit
340/640	1,146,696 dozen.
342/642	423,310 dozen.
347/348	1,932,437 dozen.
443	205,635 numbers.
447	11,783 dozen.

The limits set forth above are subject to adjustment pursuant to the provisions of the ATC and administrative arrangements notified to the Textiles Monitoring Body.

Products in the above categories exported during 1998 shall be charged to the applicable category limits for that year (see directive dated November 24, 1997) to the extent of any unfilled balances. In the event the limits established for that period have been exhausted by previous entries, such products shall be charged to the limits set forth in this directive.

Also pursuant to the ATC, and under the terms of the Special Access Program, as set forth in 63 FR 16474 (April 3, 1998), you are directed to establish guaranteed access levels for properly certified cotton, wool and man-made fiber textile products in the following categories which are assembled in Costa Rica from fabric formed and cut in the United States and re-exported to the United States from Costa Rica during the period beginning on January 1, 1999 and extending through December 31, 1999:

Category	Guaranteed access level
340/640	650,000 dozen.

Category	Guaranteed access level
342/642	250,000 dozen.
347/348	1,500,000 dozen.
443	200,000 numbers.
447	4,000 dozen.

Any shipment for entry under the Special Access Program which is not accompanied by a valid and correct certification in accordance with the provisions of the certification requirements established in the directive of May 15, 1990, as amended, shall be denied entry unless the Government of Costa Rica authorizes the entry and any charges to the appropriate specific limit. Any shipment which is declared for entry under the Special Access Program but found not to qualify shall be denied entry into the United States.

In carrying out the above directions, the Commissioner of Customs should construe entry into the United States for consumption to include entry for consumption into the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements has determined that these actions fall within the foreign affairs exception of the rulemaking provisions of U.S.C.553(a)(1).

Sincerely,

Troy H. Cribb,

Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

[FR Doc.98-33502 Filed 12-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DR-F

COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Adjustment of Import Limits for Certain Cotton and Man-Made Fiber Textile Products Produced or Manufactured in Egypt

December 14, 1998.

AGENCY: Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

ACTION: Issuing a directive to the Commissioner of Customs adjusting limits.

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 17, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Roy Unger, International Trade Specialist, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482-4212. For information on the quota status of these limits, refer to the Quota Status Reports posted on the bulletin boards of each Customs port or call (202) 927-5850. For information on embargoes and quota re-openings, call (202) 482-3715.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: Section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854);