

## ASSESSMENT OF THE NWS HURRICANE LOCAL STATEMENT

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The National Weather Service (NWS) has initiated a process to improve the information that is provided when a hurricane is approaching land. Much of this information is provided within the Hurricane Local Statement, or HLS. The HLS is a product created by NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFO) to supplement hurricane forecast information provided by the National Hurricane Center. The overall goal of this project is to improve understanding of the impacts expected during a given storm and increase the readability of the product so that the information is received as intended, and in a manner that leads to appropriate actions by the reader.

The project used social science methods and risk communication expertise to test and make subsequent recommendations to improve the HLS and the accompanying Tropical Cyclone VTEC (TCV) products. The HLS contains watch/warning information, protective action information from local officials, meteorological hazard and impact information, and meteorological conditions. A team of NOAA social scientists and hurricane specialists collectively developed a methodology for engaging HLS users and soliciting feedback on product utility. In total, a team of 8 interviewers, across NOS and NWS, completed 47 semi-structured interviews with customers representing three categories; broadcast meteorologists, emergency managers, and the HLS-savvy public. Contact information for these customers was provided by the local Weather Forecast Office staff in each of five pilot locations (Taunton, MA; Charleston, SC; Miami, FL; New Orleans, LA; and Brownsville, TX). A year later, the project explored potential refinements to the products to address questions remaining the appropriate level of detail for certain sections of the HLS, as well as the wording of impact statements, threat/impact category labels, and how to best display the HTI graphics. To help address these issues, focus groups were conducted at sites in Florida, New York, Virginia, and Texas.

This presentation will focus on interview findings, subsequent recommendations made to improve the HLS, and subsequent HLS product modifications and next steps.