



National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Marine Safety
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**ATTACHMENT 30 to the METEOROLOGY GROUP FACTUAL REPORT
DCA16MM001**

FTPmail help file.

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**** IMPORTANT NOTICES **** Read these notes carefully ****

These instructions are subject to revision....download frequently.

Effective January 08, 2008, the address of the FTPMAIL service changed from ftpmail@weather.noaa.gov to ftpmail@ftpmail.nws.noaa.gov.

If you restrict incoming e-mail as a means of preventing spam, you must configure your e-mail system to allow mail from ftpmail@ftpmail.nws.noaa.gov

99% of errors using FTPMAIL are simple typing errors, incorrect capitalization, failure to send in plain text format, leading or trailing spaces, or failure to set up any spam filters properly. SEE SECTION ON ENSURING E-MAIL REQUESTS ARE SENT IN THE PROPER FORMAT AND FOLLOW THE EXAMPLES CLOSELY.

Check time and date of forecasts. Downloaded data may not represent the latest forecast. The Internet is not part of the National Weather Service's operational data stream and should never be relied upon as a means to obtain the latest forecast and warning data. Become familiar with and use other means, such as NOAA Weather Radio, to obtain the latest forecasts and warnings. Please read our disclaimer at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/disclaimer.php>

Radiofax .TIF files now also available as (larger) .gif files

tgftp.nws.noaa.gov is the only valid FTP site for this service.

END OF NOTICES

USING FTPMAIL

This "help" file contains a detailed description of the FTPMAIL system and available products. To obtain another copy of the FTPMAIL "help" file:

-In plain text format-

Send an e-mail to: ftpmail@ftpmail.nws.noaa.gov

Subject Line: Put anything you like

Body: help

This National Weather Service (NWS) FTPMAIL server is intended to allow Internet access for users who do not have direct access to the World Wide Web but who are equipped with an e-mail system. The service is free and no signup is required. Using FTPMAIL, users can request files from NWS and have them automatically e-mailed back. Turnaround is generally less than one hour, however, performance may vary widely and the NWS cannot guarantee receipt.

Although these instructions are tailored for marine users to gain access to graphic (radiofax) and text products via e-mail, all publicly available data on the tgftp.nws.noaa.gov Internet FTP server is accessible using the FTPMAIL service.

To begin using the FTPMAIL service, the user sends a small script file via e-mail requesting the desired file(s).

THERE ARE INSTRUCTIONS IN THE EXAMPLE SECTION ON HOW TO REQUEST FILES THAT CONTAIN PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS, FILE NAMES, AVAILABLE TIMES ETC. FOR CERTAIN LOCATIONS (ATLANTIC OCEAN PACIFIC OCEAN ETC.) AND PRODUCTS (COASTAL FORECASTS, RADIOFAX CHARTS, BUOY DATA ETC.)

A listing of all available product descriptions, file names, times the product is available and issuing center can be viewed at the link below.

http://weather.noaa.gov/pub/fax/Amaster_index.html

A list of available product directories and file names can be seen by clicking the link below.

<http://weather.noaa.gov/pub/fax/>

ENSURING YOUR E-MAIL IS IN THE PROPER FORMAT

FTPMAIL E-MAIL REQUESTS MUST BE SENT IN ASCII/PLAIN TEXT ONLY.

HTML formatting will likely result in no response from the FTPMAIL server. An FAQ webpage describing several public and commercial FTP-to-EMAIL and WWW-to-EMAIL servers may be found at: www.faqs.org/faqs/internet-services/access-via-email/

Users should be familiar with sending and receiving messages and attachments with their particular e-mail system. Attachments to an e-mail are received in UUencoded form and THE MAJORITY OF MODERN E-MAIL SYSTEMS CONVERT THE UUENCODED FORM AUTOMATICALLY. However, if your system does not convert automatically, you will get back a bunch of gibberish starting with something like "begin 600 PWAE98.TIF." You will need to run the UUdecode program for that particular system. See your system administrator if you have any questions on this topic.

UUdecode freeware and shareware can be found on the Web, BUT THE EASIER SOLUTION IS TO TRY A DIFFERENT E-MAIL SYSTEM IF THAT OPTION IS AVAILABLE. The UUencoding process can add 0 to >100% overhead depending on your system and the type of file.

Files which are greater than approximately 400KB in length may be sent as multiple e-mails which must then be appended to another and UUdecoded. This can be avoided by using the "size" command following the "open" statement, e.g. "size 1000000." The maximum allowable file size is 2MB.

File sizes for NWS radiofax graphic files average 35KB but some files can be much greater; especially satellite images which can approach 1MB.

Use the "dir" command to ascertain the size of files of interest as a precaution. Users should be aware of the costs for operating their particular e-mail system before attempting to use FTPMAIL, especially when using satellite communication systems. For marine users, using FTPMAIL via INMARSAT-C for obtaining current NWS radiofax graphic files is cost prohibitive. Using the FTPMAIL compression feature of FTPMAIL is not recommended as these files are already in a compressed T4(G4) format enveloped in

TIFF for viewing. You will need a graphics program capable of displaying files in this format in order to view them. Suggestions for TIFF viewers may be found in the file <http://weather.noaa.gov/fax/rfaxtif.txt>

Make certain you have not enabled any auto-reply function in your email system.

If you see the following response and believe your script to be correct, the most likely problem is that you are sending your e-mail in HTML format rather than the required plain text format.

```
<FTP EMAIL> response
ftpmail has failed to queue your request with an error of:
    Must have an 'open [site [user [pass]]]'
```

Problems have been reported by users of Hotmail.

If you restrict incoming e-mail as a means of preventing spam, you must program your e-mail system to allow messages from:
ftpmail@ftpmail.nws.noaa.gov

The majority of error messages have been disabled. You may receive an error message back from FTPMAIL if your script is in error.

FTPMAIL problems are occasionally encountered when embedded control characters are received within the e-mail message received by the FTPMAIL server. These control characters may be introduced by the user's e-mail system and may be unavoidable.

Also be certain that each of your commands does not have any leading and/or trailing space(s) or you may see an error message with a number of statements saying "=20"

Problems may also occur when trying to go down several levels of directories simultaneously, e.g. "cd data/forecasts/marine/test."

Use a series of commands "cd data", "cd forecasts", "cd marine" instead.
In both these instances, the likely error will be "Directory not Found."

If the FTPMAIL server is too busy, you will receive an e-mail with a subject line similar to: "ftpmail job queuing for retry queue/097095.69568"

Your request will be resubmitted automatically and your requested file(s) should be received within several hours.

EXAMPLES

The following examples demonstrate the use of FTPMAIL. Indexes of currently available marine products, the list FTPMAIL commands, and suggestions for TIFF viewers may be obtained following these instructions.

To use FTPMAIL:

-In plain text format-

- o Send an e-mail via the Internet to: ftpmail@ftpmail.nws.noaa.gov
- o Put anything you like on the subject line
- o Enter a command script in the body of the message

NOTE: CORRECT CAPITALIZATION FOR COMMANDS, DIRECTORY AND FILE NAMES IS CRITICAL

If you are not sure of the particular products you want, request the files below which list FTPMAIL commands, file names, product descriptions, available times etc.

```
open
cd fax
get ftpcmd.txt    (List of FTPMAIL commands)
get rfaxtif.txt   (TIFF suggestions)
get rfaxatl.txt   (Atlantic radiofax file directory)
get rfaxpac.txt   (Pacific radiofax file directory)
get rfaxmex.txt   (Gulf of Mexico and Trop Atl radiofax file dir)
get rfaxak.txt    (Alaska radiofax and ice file directory)
get rfaxhi.txt    (Hawaii radiofax file directory)
get otherfax.txt  (Foreign charts file directory)
get marine1.txt   (Highseas,Offshore,Open Lakes,NAVTEX text file dir)
get marine2.txt   (Hurricane text file directory)
get marine3.txt   (Coastal and nearshore forecasts text file dir)
get marine4.txt   (Offshore forecasts by zone directory)
get marine5.txt   (Atlantic coastal forecasts by zone directory)
get marine6.txt   (Pacific coastal forecasts by zone directory)
get marine7.txt   (Gulf of Mexico coastal forecasts by zone dir)
get marine8.txt   (Great Lakes nearshore forecasts by zone directory)
get marine9.txt   (Alaska coastal forecasts by zone directory)
get marine10.txt  (Hawaii&Trust coastal forecasts by zone directory)
get uk.txt        (UK marine forecasts from Bracknell directory)
get canada.txt    (Canadian marine text forecast directory)
get tsunami.txt   (Tsunami products directory)
get buoydata.txt  (Buoy and C-MAN station observations directory)
get robots.txt    (Marine forecasts and info via e-mail systems)
quit
```

Example scripts are:

```
help
```

Connect to default site (tgftp.nws.noaa.gov) and send back this help file to e-mail address of requestor

```
open
cd fax
```

get PWAE98.TIF (24 hour wind and wave graphic forecast for the Atlantic) quit

Connect to default site (tgftp.nws.noaa.gov) and send back the chart file PWAE98.TIF to e-mail address of requestor

open
cd data
cd forecasts
cd marine
cd coastal
cd an
get anz231.txt (text marine forecast for Cape Cod Bay) quit

Connect to default site (tgftp.nws.noaa.gov) and send back coastal marine zone forecast ANZ231 to e-mail address of requestor

open
cd data
cd forecasts
cd zone
cd md
get mdz009.txt (Text of land forecast for Montgomery County Maryland) quit

Connect to default site (tgftp.nws.noaa.gov) and send back public land zone forecast MDZ009 to e-mail address of requestor.
(Contact your local forecast office to identify the public forecast zone number for your county, known as the UGC code)
Zones lists by State may also be found at <http://alerts.weather.gov/>

reply-to captain.kidd@noaa.gov
open
dir
quit

Connect to default site (tgftp.nws.noaa.gov) and send back the contents of the top level directory to captain.kidd@noaa.gov

Many, but not all National Weather Service forecast products may be obtained using FTPMAIL if the WMO/AWIPS Header is known.

Example:

To obtain the Atlantic high seas Forecast, WMO header FZNT01 KWBC, AWIPS header HSFAT1

Send an e-mail to: ftpmail@ftpmail.nws.noaa.gov

Subject Line: Put anything you like

Body: open

cd data
cd raw
cd fz
get fznt01.kwbc.hsf.at1.txt
quit

IMPORTANT NWS WEBPAGES

If you have access to the Internet, check out the following NWS webpages.

NWS watch warning advisory webpage
<http://www.weather.gov/>

NWS Marine Forecast webpage
<http://www.weather.gov/marine>

NWS Cell Phone webpage
Cell.weather.gov

NWS Mobile Device webpage
mobile.weather.gov

Ocean Prediction Center
<http://www.opc.ncep.noaa.gov/>

Mobile site - <http://www.opc.ncep.noaa.gov/mobile.php>

Tropical Analyses and Forecast Branch webpage
<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/marine/>

Mobile site - <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/mobile/marine.php>

Hawaii Marine Products webpage
<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/pages/marine.php>

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