**Weather info via e-mail (charts of good quality!)**
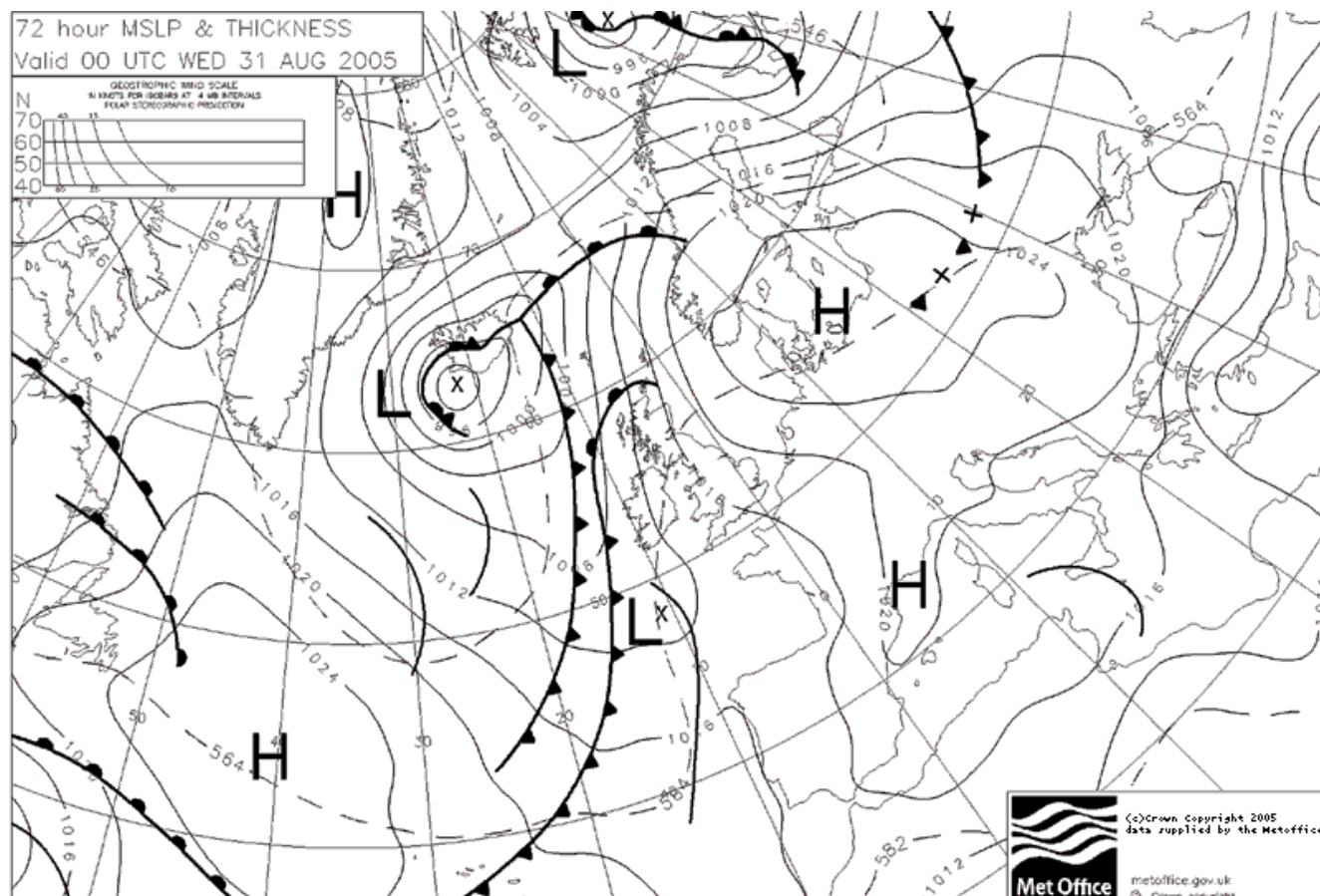
For use onboard you can download this webpage in pdf format. (This might be an older version than the page).

Most sailors are probably aware that the facsimile receiver *(radio receiver that prints weathercharts)* produces mainly low quality weather charts. If you have onboard acces to e-mail and not too strict limits on the receiving of files, you should be able to receive real good quality weather charts onboard. On this webpage I will give you some information and sample e-mail messages te help you getting around starting this service. One really nice available feature was the reception of weather data from buoys. Unfortunattely this service is malfunctioning due to complex technical reasons. It is unsure if they will be able to get it up and running again :-(

*Disclaimer: the described service relies on internet, and should therefore never be relied upon as a means to obtain the latest weather forecast and warning data. All information supplied on this page is based on the FTP mail service from the National Weather Service (NWS) from the US government. Information from this page can be outdated.*



72HR North Atlantic Surface Forecast/Thickness.

According the US National Weather Service (NWS) the average files are 35 kB, but they can be a lot bigger. From my experience the tiff formatted weather charts seem to be bigger (I received files upto 105 kB). There must be software available wherein you can open them. It is possible to receive them as well in GIF format, but these filesizes are bigger. Most windows computers are capable of viewing tiff right out of the box, but I think gif is even more wide spread. After a request it can take from 10 minutes till an hour or even more to receive the requested files.

*Main help file*

We'll start requesting the main help file. Herein you can find for instance all file names of all areas where charts are available and the procedure to request them. All the intresting information you *should* read from the NWS is in it as well. The e-mail must be adressed to ftpmail@ftpmail.nws.noaa.gov , you can put anything you like in the subject, the body must contain 'help'. And you can send it than. Sample e-mail message. *One important remark: capitalization is important, if not used as described your commands won't work!*

*Area and other help files*

The what I call them 'Area help files' all contain a specific list with charts or data files available and the appropriate procedure to request them is stated in it.
The files are received via the default e-mail adres ftpmail@ftpmail.nws.noaa.gov. The files are in an other location

(fax directory) than the main help file. For this reason you have to use the following format as example in the body. Replace *file.txt* by the desired file.

```
open
cd fax
get file.txt
get file2.txt
quit
```

Here follow 2 examples with the bodies (body is the message text you normally see in your e-mail program) which you can select, copy (ctrl-c) and paste (ctrl-v) into the message.

### ftpcmd.txt

All the to be used commands. Sample e-mail and body:

```
open
cd fax
get ftpcmd.txt
quit
```

### otherfax.txt

International charts, the example weather charts come are in this list. Sample e-mail and the body:

```
open
cd fax
get otherfax.txt
quit
```

*All other available files (for instance: west atlantic, gulf of mexico, pacific, tsunami info and hurricane information) can be found in the 'Main Help File'.*

### Weather Charts

After all this *preliminary* stuff I will finally show how to receive some weathercharts. Due to the trading area of my company I have mainly used the charts from the North Atlantic. In the following example we make a request for the North Atlantic charts from the actual chart, the actual sea, swell and wind chart. Sample e-mail and body:

```
open
cd fax
get PJGA93.TIF
get PPVA89.TIF
quit
```

One of the requests I used several times, is the following one with 0 hour forecast, 24 hour forecast and actual sea swell and wind. sample e-mail and body:

```
open
cd fax
get PPVA89.TIF
get PPVE89.TIF
get PJGA93.TIF
quit
```

In the hurricane season it can be quite interesting to receive the actual situation and outlook. As example I made a request for the west atlantic for summary and outlook, public advisory and technical advisory about a specific hurricane (storm1), the outlook for eastern pacific and outlook for central pacific. The hurricane service is not the whole year available. The hurricane information help file (marine2.txt) gives all information about this. The serrvice is mainly available between 1 June and 30 November.

sample e-mail and body:

```
open
cd data
cd hurricane_products
cd atlantic
```

```
cd weather
get outlook.txt
get summary.txt
cd /data
cd hurricane_products
cd atlantic
cd storm_1
get advisory.txt
get technical_advisory.txt
cd /data
cd hurricane_products
cd eastern_pacific
cd weather
get outlook.txt
cd /data
cd hurricane_products
cd central_pacific
cd weather
get outlook.txt
quit
```

A sample of a received message with the outlook for the Eastern Pacific follows here.

```
Expires:No;;271952
ABPZ20 KNHC 151135
TWOEP
TROPICAL WEATHER OUTLOOK
NWS TPC/NATIONAL HURRICANE
CENTER MIAMI FL 400 AM PST
WED NOV 15 2006

FOR THE EASTERN NORTH
PACIFIC...EAST OF 140
DEGREES WEST LONGITUDE..

THE NATIONAL HURRICANE
CENTER IS ISSUING
ADVISORIES ON TROPICAL
STORM SERGIO...LOCATED
ABOUT 440 MILES SOUTH OF
MANZANILLO MEXICO.

ELSEWHERE...TROPICAL STORM
FORMATION IS NOT EXPECTED
THROUGH THURSDAY.

$$
FORECASTER BEVEN
```

### Additional information

When I use this system I normally named the subject of the request e-mail to the request (as can be seen in the sample e-mails). The different requests I kept somewhere in the e-mail program to make it easy to re-use requests.
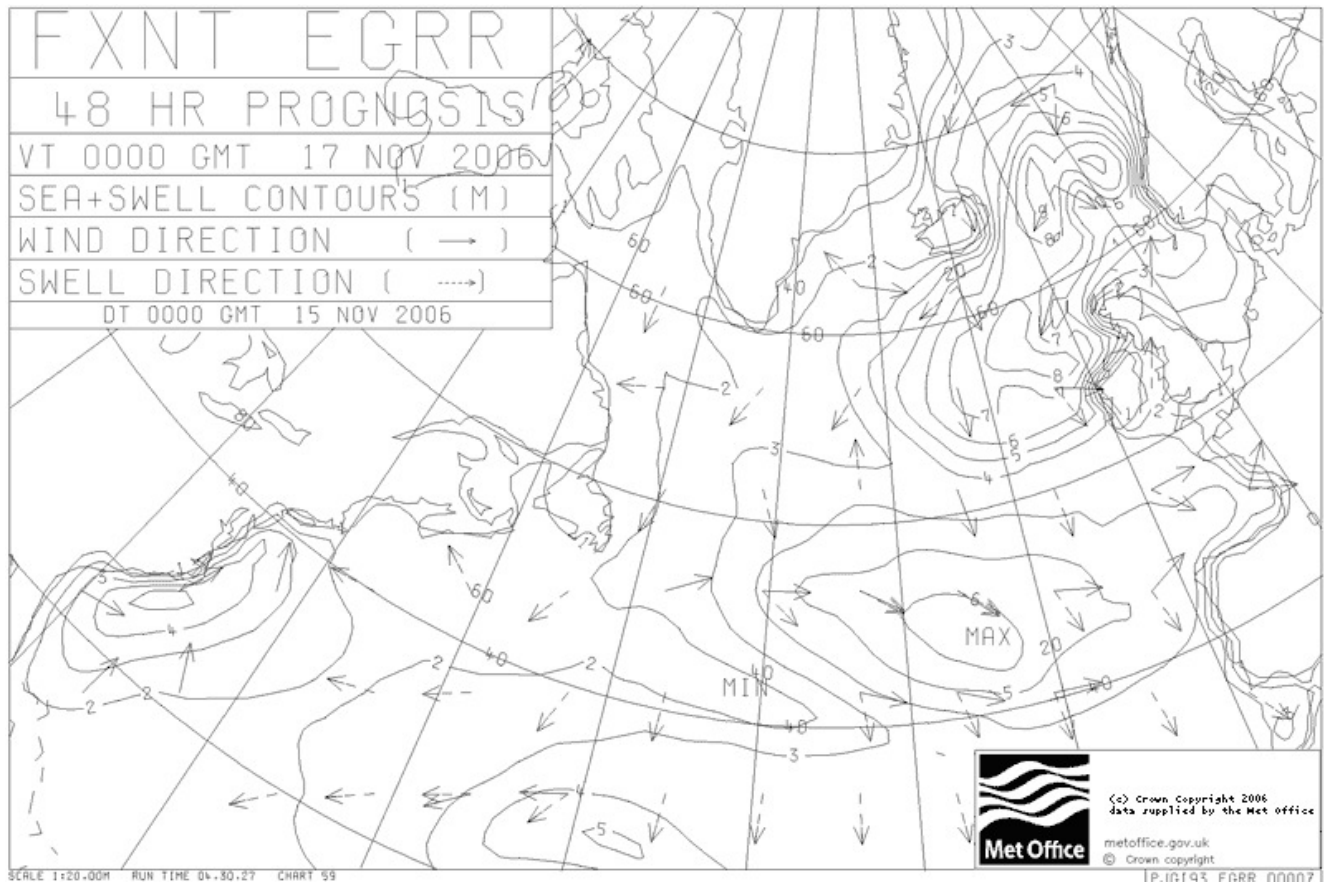
Onboard the ships I worked, I wasn't able to use the standard installed viewing software for tiff graphics. That gave an unusable result. Instead of that I stored the received files somewhere, and then opened them with other software. Under most Windows versions this can be done by right clicking in the explorer and than selecting 'Open With'. The standard Windows viewer for graphics and faxes should be suitable to work with TIFF graphic files.

For everyone his and hers convenience I putted a few files online. These files aren't updated as on the NWS servers! For your conveniense you'll find here as well links to the UK Metoffice the US National Weather Service (NWS) and the NWS Marine website.

- main help file
- FTP mail commands
- International charts
- UK marine products
- Hurricane products

- US Coastal forecasts by zone for the Atlantic
- Radiofax products for Western Atlantic Ocean
- Advice about software for viewing of TIFF graphics

This internet page is also available in dutch language. To end with this hopefully informative and usefull webpage you can see one of the North Atlantic charts, with sea swell and wind indicated on it. The uninterrupted arrows indicate the wind, the interupted ones give swell and all the curved lines indicate sea/swell height as indicated on the legend. I also would like to thank the cooperation of the Metoffice and the National Weather Service.



**Sea swell wind forecast North Atlantic (edited).**

Naar boven / To top

E-mail me.