102–567, the Secretary of Commerce must certify that these consolidation, automation, and closure certifications will not result in any degradation of service to the affected areas of responsibility and must publish the proposed consolidation, automation, and closure certifications in the FR. The documentation supporting each proposed certification includes the following:

(1) A draft memorandum by the meteorologist(s)-in-charge recommending the certification(s), the final of which will be endorsed by the Regional Director and the Assistant Administrator of the NWS if appropriate, after consideration of public comments and completion of consultation with the Modernization Transition Committee (the Committee);

(2) A description of local weather characteristics and weather-related concerns which affect the weather services provided within the service area;

(3) A comparison of the services provided within the service area and the services to be provided after such action;

(4) A description of any recent or expected modernization of NWS operation which will enhance services in the service area;

(5) An identification of any area within the affected service area which would not receive coverage (at an elevation of 10,000 feet) by the next generation weather radar network;

(6) Evidence, based upon operational demonstration of modernized NWS operations, which was considered in reaching the conclusion that no degradation in service will result from such action including the WSR–88D Radar Commissioning Report(s), User Confirmation of Services Report(s), and the Decommissioning Readiness Report (as applicable);

(7) Evidence, based upon operational demonstration of modernized NWS operations, which was considered in reaching the conclusion that no degradation in service will result from such action including the ASOS Commissioning Report; series of three letters between NWS and FAA confirming that weather services will continue in full compliance with applicable flight aviation rules after ASOS commissioning; Surface Aviation Observation Transition Checklist, where required, documenting transfer of augmentation and backup responsibility from NWS to FAA; successful resolution of ASOS user confirmation of services complaints; and an in-place supplementary data program at the responsible WFO(s);

(8) Warning and forecast verification statistics for pre-modernized and modernized services which were utilized in determining that services have not been degraded;

(9) An Air Safety Appraisal for offices which are located on an airport; and

(10) A letter appointing the liaison officer.

These proposed certifications do not include any report of the Committee which could be submitted in accordance with sections 706(b)(6) and 707(c) of Pub. L. 102–567. In December 1995 the Committee decided that, in general, they would forego the optional consultation on proposed certifications. Instead, the Committee would just review certifications after the public comment period had closed so their consultation would be with the benefit of public comments that had been submitted.

This notice does not include the complete certification packages because they are too voluminous to publish. Copies of the certification packages and supporting documentation can be obtained through the contact listed above.

Once all public comments have been received and considered, the NWS will complete consultation with the Committee and determine whether to proceed with the final certifications. At the June 25, and September 24, 1997 MTC meetings the Committee stated that its endorsement of certifications is ''subject to the following qualifications:

(1) The number of trained staff in each modernized field office meets staffing requirements as established by the modernization criteria and documented in the National Implementation Plan and the Human Resources Plan (WBS 1100). Delays in training or failure to fill required positions will increase the risk of degradation of service;

(2) The availability of operational systems in each modernized field office meets requirements as established by the modernization criteria and documented in the System Commissioning and Support Function Demonstration Plans; and

(3) The operational and administrative infrastructures and technical development needed to support the modernized field offices be maintained as required by the modernization plan.'' It is expected that these qualifications can be met for the above proposed certifications. If these qualifications can not be met prior to the December MTC meeting, these proposed certifications may or may not be presented to the Committee. If a decision to certify is made, the Secretary of Commerce must publish the final certification in the FR and transmit the certification to the appropriate Congressional committees prior to consolidating, automating, and closing these offices.

Dated: September 26, 1997.

Robert S. Winokur,

Acting Assistant Administrator for Weather Services.

[FR Doc. 97–26127 Filed 10–1–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–12–M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Weather Service Modernization and Associated Restructuring

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

ACTION: Notice and opportunity for public comment.

SUMMARY: The NWS is publishing proposed certifications for the automation and closure of the following Weather Service offices at the indicated FAA Weather Observation Service Level:

(1) Abilene, TX Weather Service Office (WSO) which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level C and with services being provided by the future San Angelo, Dallas/Fort Worth, Lubbock, and Midland/Odessa Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs);

(2) Concordia, KS WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with Services being provided by the future Topeka, Wichita, and Hastings WFOs;

(3) Ely, NV WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Elko WFO;

(4) Havre, MT WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Great Falls WFO;

(5) International Falls, MN WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Level D and with services by the future Duluth and Eastern North Dakota WFOs;

(6) Santa Maria, CA WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level C and with services being provided by the future Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay Area WFOs;

(7) Tupelo, MS WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Memphis and Jackson WFOs;

(8) Valentine, NE WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future North Platte WFO;

(9) Victoria, TX WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Corpus Christi, Austin/San Antonio, and Houston/Galveston WFOs;

(10) Wichita Falls, TX WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Oklahoma City and Dallas/Fort Worth WFOs; and

(11) Winnemucca, NV WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Elko WFO.

In accordance with Public Law 102–567, the public will have 60-day in which to comment on these proposed automation and closure certifications.

DATES: Comments are requested by December 1, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the proposes automation and closure packages should be sent to Tom Beaver, Room 11426, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, telephone 301–713–0300. All comments should be sent to Tom Beaver at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Beaver at 301–713–0300.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with section 706 of Pub. L. 102–567, the Secretary of Commerce must certify that these automations and closures will not result in any degradation of service to the affected areas of responsibility and must publish the proposed automation and closure certifications in the FR. The documentation supporting each proposed certification includes the following:

(1) A draft memorandum by the meteorologist(s)-in-charge recommending the certification, the final of which will be endorsed by the Regional Director and the Assistant Administrator of the NWS if appropriate, after consideration of public comments and completion of consultation with the Modernization Transition Committee (the Committee);

(2) A description of local weather characteristics and weather-related concerns which affect the weather services provided within the service area;

(3) A comparison of the services provided within the service area and the services to be provided after such action;

(4) A description of any recent or expected modernization of NWS operation which will enhance services in the service area;

(5) An identification of any area within the affected service area which would not receive coverage (at an elevation of 10,000 feet) by the next generation weather radar network;

(6) Evidence, based upon operational demonstration of modernized NWS operations, which was considered in reaching the conclusion that no degradation in service will result from such action including the ASOS Commissioning Report; services of three letters between NWS and FAA confirming that weather services will continue in full compliance with applicable flight aviation rules after ASOS commissioning; Surface Aviation Observation Transition Checklist, where required, documenting transfer of augmentation and backup responsibility from NWS to FAA; successful resolution of ASOS users confirmation of services complaints; and an in-place supplementary data program at the responsible WFO(s);

(7) Warning and forecast verification statistics for pre-modernized and modernized services which were utilized in determining that services have not been degraded;

(8) An Air Safety Appraisal for offices which are located on an airport; and

(9) A letter appointing the liaison officer.

These proposed certifications do not include any report of the Committee which could be submitted in accordance with sections 706(b)(6) and 707(c) of Pub. L. 102–567. In December 1995 the Committee decided that, in general, they would forego the optional consultation on proposed certifications. Instead, the Committee would just review certifications after the public comment period had closed so their consultation would be with the benefit of pubic comments that had been submitted.

This notice does not include the complete certification packages because they are too voluminous to publish. Copies of the certification packages and supporting documentation can be obtained through the contact listed above.

Once all public comments have been received and considered, the NWS will complete consultation with the Committee and determine whether to proceed with the final certification. At the June 25, 1997 and the September 24, 1997 MTC meetings the Committee stated that its endorsement of certifications is ''subject to the following qualification:

(1) The number of trained staff in each modernized field office meets staffing requirements as established by the modernization criteria and documented in the National Implementation Plan and the Human Resources Plan (WBS 1100). Delays in training or failure to fill required positions will increase the risk of degradation of service;

(2) The availability of operational systems in each modernized field office meets requirements as established by the modernization criteria and documented in the System Commissioning and Support Function Demonstration Plans; and

(3) The operational and administrative infrastructures and technical development needed to support the modernized field offices be maintained as required by the modernization plan.'' It is expected that these qualifications can be met for the above proposed certifications. If these qualifications can not be met prior to the December MTC meeting, these proposed certifications may or may not be presented to the Committee. If a decision to certify is made, the Secretary of Commerce must publish the final certification in the FR and transmit the certification to the appropriate Congressional committees prior to automating and closing these offices.

Dated: September 26, 1997.

Robert S. Winokur,

Acting Assistant Administrator for Weather Services.

[FR Doc. 97–26128 Filed 10–1–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–12–M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Weather Service Modernization and Associated Restructuring

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

ACTION: Notice and opportunity for public comment.

SUMMARY: The NWS is publishing a proposed certification for the automation of the Williston, ND, Weather Service Office which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Bismarck Weather Forecast Office (WFO).

In accordance with Pub. L. 102–567, the public will have 60 days in which to comment on this proposed automation certification.