

Suffern Paul

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 6:13 PM
To: Suffern Paul
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Alaska A-Paid Observers

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello Paul,

I was asked by Beth McNulty to respond to your query regarding the status of Alaska's A-Paid observer program.

First off, we do still have an A-Paid station at PALJ. However, the observers have expressed a desire to quit the program. Because of this, we are not receiving the full complement of observations from this station anymore. Typically, we only get two or three observations per day. We are currently working with them to establish a lease deal, which will allow us to install an automated station to replace the A-Paid station. If things go well, we will have a fully automated system in place at Port Alsworth this summer.

We are working on similar arrangements at the former A-Paid locations of PASW (Skwentna) and PAMX (McCarthy), but those may take longer. It is all dependent on how fast leases can be worked out.

Currently, we only have three operational A-Paid stations. Those are PAPT (Puntilla), PAEC (Chulitna River) and PALJ. We still have a station at PAEL (Elfin Cove), but the observers are away from the station for another couple of months. We expect that the observers at PAEL will quit the program soon because they are traveling more and more each year.

Regarding the issue of the availability of the observations from these "unofficial" observation platforms...we are still working that issue with the FAA. However, in talking with our FAA contacts just a few weeks ago, it sounds like we may be making some progress on this issue. The observations from these platforms are currently available on the Internet, but they are not available through the traditional METAR channels. We are hoping that an agreement will be reached with the FAA soon, so that we will be able to transmit the observations from these platforms as METARS, through normal METAR channels.

If you have any further questions, please let me know.

Take care,
Mike

--

Michael Couch
Data Acquisition Branch Chief, Acting
Regional Surface Observing and Cooperative Program Manager
National Weather Service Alaska Region Headquarters
