



INSTRUCTIONS FOR MEDIA

Official members of the media may be permitted to fly a storm mission by contacting the 403rd Wing Public Affairs office at 403wg.pa2@us.af.mil or (228) 377-2056 during normal office hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Central Time).

Media interested in flying an upcoming or active storm mission should contact PA immediately, as slots fill up quickly. Up to three media outlets may fly at a time. To film a training (non-storm) flight, allow up to two to three weeks for coordination.

Media members must submit a request letter on company letter head signed by their outlet's publisher or editor. The letter must include the names and contact information of the reporters, photographers or videographers requesting to fly, the product they plan to produce, and the projected publication or air time. Send the letter to 403WG.PA2@us.af.mil.

Transportation Rules:

- Media must secure their own transportation to/from Keesler or other designated airbase.
- There is no guarantee a mission will land at the same base from which it departed. Often this is known ahead of time but is not always the case. If a mission lands at an alternate base, media must secure their own transportation from there.
- Media interested in flying missions outside the Continental U.S. must coordinate with PA to secure special permission from the foreign desk in Washington.

Liability:

- Despite a good safety record, all mission passengers must sign a standard release form prior to boarding the flight.
- Flying through thunderstorms sometimes involves severe turbulence, hail and lightning, but not always.

Medical:

- Media and other passengers with head colds should not fly missions due to the danger of an ear or sinus block.
- Epileptics have suffered seizures in flight.
- All media should consult a physician if any medical concerns exist.
- Medication, to include aspirin, decongestants and airsickness pills, are not stocked on flights. Those in need of medication should carry their own.
- Most passengers do not suffer airsickness, but if anyone flying as a passenger should speak with a crewmember immediately if they feel sick. While airsickness bags are passed out at the beginning of each flight, they are not expected always to be used.

Hydration:

- Dehydration is a serious concern in the hot/humid climates in which missions are flown, and is compounded by dry air inflight.
- Passengers should restrict alcohol, coffee, or sugar-laden drinks prior to and during flight. Water is the best choice and should be drunk prior to take-off.

Food:

- A light meal is recommended prior to flight -- stomachs with food generally are more stable during flight.
- Passengers should bring their own meals for the 10-12 hour flights.
- Coffee and water is available, as well as a small convection oven for heating up TV dinners, though it will sometimes not work. A hot pot to boil water for soups, tea and more is available. There is no refrigeration on board, so all food should be non-perishable or in a cooler with ice.

Clothes:

- Passengers should wear comfortable clothes Flat, comfortable shoes or boots
- Sunglasses for viewing storm out window
- Dress in layers and bring a jacket because it can get very cold at high-altitude
- Bring enough funds, personal items, professional equipment to be self-sufficient for several days
- Pillow for nap

Special consideration for Winter Storm flights: Think cold, not tropical, when dressing for a winter storm flight. Long pants and consider some long underwear. It is -50F up at altitude. The aircraft is not always well insulated, especially near the floor. Dress in layers, and pay attention to your feet. There are parts of the airplane that are colder than others, but be prepared to spend some time in a colder section.

Arrival Instructions:

- Arrive a minimum two hours prior to takeoff; earlier to record the permission briefing
- Arrival location and time will sent to media during coordination.
- For travel planning, the nearest airports are:
 - [Gulfport-Biloxi Regional](#) (30 min)
 - [New Orleans, LA](#) (90 min)
 - [Mobile, AL](#) (1 hr)

DRIVING DIRECTIONS FROM I-10:

- From I-10 turn onto I-110 South.
 - From I-110 South approximately 3.0 miles (Only two exits will be at the end of bridge) take the left exit that will take you to US-90 West.
 - From US-90 West approximately 1.5 miles (Second red light) take a right on White Avenue.
 - Stay on White Avenue until you reach Keesler's main gate.
-

DRIVING DIRECTIONS FROM Gulfport/Biloxi AIRPORT:

- Turn left onto Airport Road.
- Turn right onto US-49 North.
- From US-49 approximately 0.6 miles merge onto I-10 east toward BILOXI/ MOBILE.
- From I-10 approximately 12 miles turn onto I-110 South.
- From I-110 South approximately 3.0 miles take a right on US- 90 West.

- From US-90 West approximately 1.5 miles take a right on White Avenue.
- Stay on White Avenue until you reach Keesler's main gate.

Media Escort:

- An escort will be assigned to media to arrange time to visit the flight deck (turns may be taken), coordinate crew to answer questions and be a go-between.
- Most escorts have experienced several hurricane flights and will be available to answer questions when the crew is busy.

CAVEAT:

- **Hurricane Hunter crew cannot make forecasts or predictions as to storm behavior.**
- Hurricane specialists at the National Hurricane Center use HH weather data, in addition to numerous other sources and complex computer models, to make those forecasts. No single flight provides the breadth of understanding of any given storm to extrapolate future behavior. Storms fluctuate in strength and sometimes wobble in their paths. Those NHC experts use HH feedback to make storm predictions and inform decision makers. Refer to their reports for projections.

Live Feeds:

- While not recommended, live, audio-only interviews via HF-radio phone patch may be possible inflight, though timing must be flexible. Media may schedule several potential windows of time as patches may not be possible due to crew requirements at any given time during the mission, poor atmospheric conditions, heavy rains or other air traffic using the designated radio frequency.
- Also, such use of the radio frequency must be short due to other aircraft needing to use them.
- Sound quality is often poor due to atmospheric conditions.

Pool Footage

- In the past, media organizations have arranged to gain footage shot by other media organizations inflight. This must be coordinated between agencies.
- PA does not maintain public domain footage, though it may provide a list of previous media orgs who have flown HH missions who might be willing to share.

The Finished Product

- A copy of any article or audio or video product will be requested for archival purposes.
- Upon receipt, PA will send an authentic "Hurricane Hunter" certificate to the media.