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Reproducing new and old operational systems on development workstations using containers

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Linux containers (Singularity and Docker) have significantly assisted with the Bureau of Meteorology's transition of operational weather model statistical post-processing from an old mid-range system to a new data-intensive HPC cluster. Containers provided a way to run the same software as both old and new systems on development workstations, which led to significantly easier development and allowed migration work to begin well before full readiness of the new HPC cluster system. Containers also provided reproducibility and consistent results for scientific verification of post-processing software. This talk describes how containers have been used in a team containing a mix of scientists and software developers, what has been learnt from the use of containers and recommendations for other teams adopting containers as part of their development process.

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