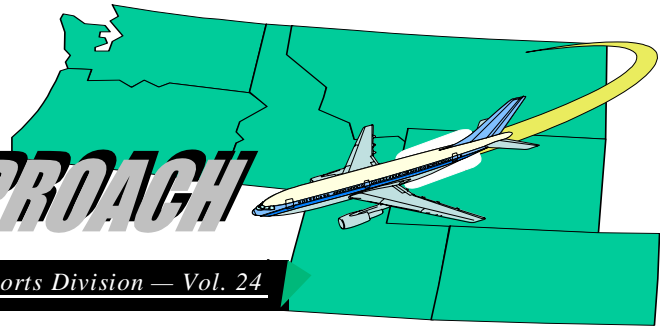




THE AIRPORTS APPROACH



A Publication of the Northwest Mountain Region Airports Division — Vol. 24

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A signed Appropriations Act means a “Happy New Year” for Airports

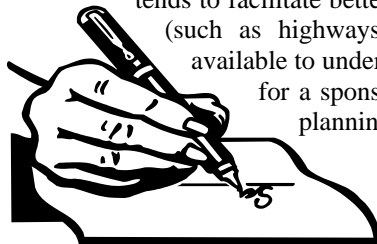
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ith the President's December 8 signing of the "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (H.R. 4818)," funds became available to the Department of Transportation and eight other government departments. However, before the Federal Aviation Administration can issue grants, internal government processing must occur.

This process includes an apportionment schedule from the Office of Management and Budget, and the apportionment of funds to each modal agency. Typically, this takes about 30 to 45 days, but the holidays may add to this delay. On a positive note, with Secretary Norman Mineta's continued tenure in the President's Cabinet, there should be no further delays attributed to the orientation of a new Secretary and staff. Even so, as I gaze into my government-issued crystal ball, I do not expect to see funds available for grants until early February 2005.

During this grant inactivity time, we can still work on grant closeouts and prepare offers to accept grants as soon as possible after the Airport Improvement Program funds are available. In order to accomplish this, early project formulation and coordination with your local Airports District Offices (ADO's) should already be under way. If it is not, it is imperative that each sponsor begin this initiative immediately.

Remember, early grant acceptance leads to a longer construction season. It also tends to facilitate better bids, because there may be less grant work available (such as highways), which could mean more contractors ready and available to undertake new work. With this in mind, the ideal scenario is for a sponsor already to have selected a consultant for design or planning.



If you anticipate a fiscal year 2005 grant, and have not done so, you should immediately contact your ADO to start the project formulation process.

— Warren Ferrell



DIVISION MANAGER'S COLUMN

Once again we are starting the new fiscal year with a new work plan for the regional Airports program. The plan is similar to those of previous years, with new details and a few new expected accomplishments.

The entire agency is becoming increasingly performance based. Our work plan now is developed in alignment with the FAA performance plan, as well as that of the Airports program nationally. The work plan establishes expectations of accomplishment in the areas of Safety, Capacity, International Leadership and Organizational Excellence. New items this year include:

- Inventory deviations from certain safety-related design standards at commercial-service airports;
- Revalidate runway safety areas at Part 139 airports.
- Assist in the preparation and timely approval of the required new airport certification manuals.
- Inventory airport pavement that may be experiencing failure due to an alkali-silica reaction.
- Closeout of older passenger-facility-charge projects.

As in past years, we will continue our emphasis on completing development of standard safety areas, and the effective and timely processing of all elements of Airport Improvement Program projects.

To view the entire plan, along with accomplishments during the year, please go to our web site at: http://www.faa.gov/arp/anm/publications/work_plan/index.cfm?nav=workplan.

We look forward to working with you to achieve another successful year in improving the airports in this region. And, we wish each of you a wonderful and safe holiday season.



Feedback becomes an instrument of change for construction specifications

On November 18, the Northwest Mountain region posted an update to the construction specifications (Notice 16).

Major revisions include grade and smoothness requirements for base and pavement surfaces, cold-joint-construction requirements for asphalt pavements, and alkali-silica reactivity and deleterious aggregate requirements for Portland concrete cement pavements. The changes resulted from feedback from sponsors and consultants, and will correct deficiencies in our specifications.

Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5370-10A is presently being updated and most of the Notice 16 revisions will be included in 150/5370-10B. You may download the word document at: <http://www.faa.gov/arp/anm/services/construction/notice16.doc>.

We encourage everyone to continue to provide us comments.

— Jack Scott

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Public meeting for St. George replacement airport offers good information to attendees

The City of St. George, Utah, has been doing planning and environmental work in support of eventual development of a replacement airport that would serve their city. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is now being prepared for the proposed project.

The principal issue for consideration in the EIS is potential noise impacts over Zion National Park, and possibly other protected properties in the vicinity of the proposed airport site. On November 16, 2004, a public information meeting was held in St. George, to provide an opportunity for interested individuals to learn about the status of the study and information developed to date. Information was provided on noise and flight tracks, air-tour activity, land use, and the cultural and natural environment. The information was provided by static displays, as well as a slide presentation by the study consultant.

Several consultant representatives were available to answer technical questions regarding each of the environmental categories being studied. Representatives of the City of St. George and Federal Aviation Administration were available as well.

The approximate 55 people who attended the meeting seemed to appreciate the extent of information provided.

The next phase of the study is completion of the technical analyses. The noise study will be the most comprehensive of these. The study schedule calls for a draft EIS to be made available for review by April 2005. A final EIS is scheduled for completion by October 2005.

— Dave Field

Reauthorization incorporates new voluntary airport-low-emissions program

The most recent reauthorization legislation for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Vision 100 – Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (P.L. 108-176), established a national program to reduce airport ground emissions at commercial-service airports located in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas.

The new Voluntary Airport Low Emissions (VALE) program allows airport sponsors to use funds from the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) or passenger facility charges (PFC's) to finance low-emission vehicles, refueling and recharging stations, airline gate electrification, and other airport improvements that will benefit air quality. There was no separate "pot" of funds created to finance this work. The VALE program is funded out of the noise set-aside, and our regional AIP discretionary budget.

A key provision of the VALE program is that the airport sponsor must receive airport-emission-reduction credits for VALE projects. Before the FAA approves a project, the state or local air quality agency, or the Environmental Protection Agency must assure the FAA that such credits will be provided.

If you are interested in this type of work and your airport is eligible, you should plan for consideration in fiscal year 2006 (FY-06) or later. Because we are now planning for FY-06, you should contact your Airports District Office (ADO), as soon as possible about including a project in FY-06 or later, since our FY-05 program is already set.

For more information about this program and the criteria for participation, please visit FAA's website at: <http://www.faa.gov/arp/environmental/VALE/Index.cfm>. If you have any questions, or would like to discuss this program further, please contact your ADO.

— Dave Field

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Airports successfully meet first requirement of new Part 139

December 9th has come and gone, and with it came the first transition into the new requirements of Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 139.

One of the requirements is that all class I airports must submit their new airport certification manual (ACM) to us for approval. And, all but one of the 43 Northwest Mountain Region airports met the December 9 deadline. The one exception arrived on December 10.

The task of reviewing the ACM's began immediately, and a number of them have been reviewed. We have been in contact with the airports whose ACM's have begun the review process, in an effort to achieve the standards of the requirement. Idaho Falls Regional Airport has the distinction of having the first approved ACM in the region. We will contact the remaining airports as their ACM reaches the review process, working with each one to make any necessary changes, and meet our turnaround deadline of April 9, 2005.

The next important Part 139 date is June 9, 2005, when all class II, III, and IV airports must submit their ACM's for approval. We know some airports have never had an ACM, so we are available to help with the development of the one. We will work with each airport to make this transition as easy as possible. Please remember to use the template that has been provided for you. It is the only format that will be approved.

If you need assistance, please contact your certification safety inspector or call George Allison at 425-227-2376, or send him an email at george.allison@faa.gov.

— George Allison

Regional office restructures parking lot for better security

To further improve the security of the Regional Office (RO) parking lot, the Logistics and Security Divisions, and the building owners have implemented a plan to construct a new visitor parking area, and permanently close the entrance/exits formerly located on Lind Avenue and Southwest 16th Street.

This plan has effectively separated a secured parking area for "Visitor Vehicles Only." This designated area is located at the southwest corner of the parking lot, at the furthest possible location from the building.

This plan places the guard station in a position to physically direct and control visitor vehicles.

— Courtesy of Logistics Division

Bureaucratic Balderdash

Many have commented that government acronyms are impossible to figure out. Others just have problems with bureaucratic speech in general. We have been told that when you hear some bureaucrats/engineers speak, you really need an interpreter. Here are some examples - bureaucratic speak – possible interpretations:

"Test results were extremely gratifying."

(We are so surprised that it works.)

"Close project coordination."

(We know whom to blame.)

"A number of different approaches are being tried."

(We are still grasping at straws.)

"Please read and initial."

(Let's spread the responsibility for the mistake.)

Stay tuned. There are more to come, next time.

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Location! Location! Location!

— *it's vital in positioning airport signs*

The airport certification safety inspectors (ACSI's) recently have found signs on airports that do not meet standards. Using the criteria listed in Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5340-18, the ACSI evaluates the components of the sign system, general signing conventions, sign size and location, and installation and operation.

The placement of hold-position signs seems to cause the greatest problem. The first step is to ensure the hold-position line is in the correct location, as specified in AC 150/5340-1. The edge of the first solid yellow line is the holding position. This is critical, because measuring from the wrong location can cause the sign location to be out of tolerance, which is plus or minus 10 feet. In short, the sign must be in line with the edge of the hold-position marking, or within the tolerance that is allowed. All construction projects involving hold-position markings and signs must be evaluated to ensure the correlation between the hold-position marking and the hold-position sign is maintained.

Hold-position signs, as well as all other signs on the airport also must be positioned within the specified perpendicular distance from the taxiway/runway edge to the near side of the sign, as outlined in AC 150/5340-18, Table 2. The taxiway/runway edge is defined as either the edge of pavement or the outer side of the edge marking, if present. For example, size 2 signs have a 20- to 35-foot perpendicular distance from the taxiway/runway edge to the near side of the sign. When placing a sign at an intersection, this perpendicular distance is measured from the edge of each of the components that make up the intersection (taxiway/taxiway, runway/taxiway, runway/runway). In addition, Table 2 provides the sign heights for the legend, face and maximum installed height. Runway distance-remaining sign distances are described in Table 4.

Signs are evaluated using general placement information provided in AC 150/5340-18, paragraph 12, "General Signing Conventions." In AC 150/5210-22, "Airport Certification Manual," paragraph 302 states marking plans must receive FAA approval before

they are implemented. The airport should provide a legible color diagram of the airport sign and marking systems. These diagrams are good for evaluating the sign color, layout, and general location. But, the airport is responsible for ensuring the correct placement. Keep in mind that the Airports District Offices approve the projects, but they rely on the assurance from the sponsor that all placement standards are achieved.

The airport must take a very active roll in the review of construction projects. In AC150/5200-18C, "Airport Safety Self-Inspection," paragraph 11d(7) provides that during the process of the continuous surveillance inspection, the airport will check for and report confusing or missing signs, markings, or lighting that potentially could confuse or mislead pilots. Also, paragraph 13b(2), "Marking and Signs" provides for a special inspection after construction or maintenance operations to ensure that signs and markings are correct.

If you need more information regarding hold-position signs and markings, contact your safety certification inspector.



At left is an example of a runway holding-position marking at Gallatin Field, Bozeman, Montana. (Photo and article by Rich Van Allman)

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Ensure your snow-control plans are updated, your personnel trained for winter surprises

It is the time of year in the western United States when the snow gnomes (*pictured below*) can strike without warning. Nature can put snow anywhere it wants, at anytime. We cannot stop snow; we can only deal with it when it is on the ground.

Snow control plans should be dusted off, reviewed with the parties taking part in the plan, and changed to make them more effective. Training, for both experienced hands and people new to the airport, should include Notices to Airmen (NOTAM) procedures, response times, traffic control, snow placement, and emergency procedures.

One of the issues we deal with each year is runway-friction measurement. Both pilot reports, and the use of airport vehicles to estimate braking action are forms of measurement. But we find these are subjective methods of reporting runway surface conditions. The Federal Aviation Administration recommends the use of friction-measuring equipment for winter field condition reports. Airport operators can utilize two types of friction-measuring equipment: decelerometers, or continuous friction-measuring equipment (CFME).

When used correctly by trained personnel, the decelerometer or CFME equipment readings provide a “mu” value (coefficient of friction) that allows air-carrier staff, pilots, and airport operators to make safety related operational decisions.

Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5200-30, “Airport Winter Safety and Operations,” contains guidelines for friction measuring equipment use at airports, including reporting procedures. Friction surveys should be conducted during the following five situations, as well as anytime the airport operator believes the information will be helpful in snow-removal efforts:

- **When the central 60 feet of the runway is contaminated over a distance 500 feet or more;**
- **When visual runway inspections or pilot braking action reports indicate runway friction is changing;**
- **Following anti-icing, deicing, or sanding operations;**
- **At least once during each 8 hour shift, when contaminants are present; and**
- **Immediately following any aircraft incident or accident on the runway.**

— Jack Hutchison



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The art of setting DBE contract goals

Ready, set, go! You have your approved overall Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal for the year. But, wait! How do you set your contract goals? The FAA generally does not approve individual contract goals. In short, your contract goals should be set not to fall below or exceed your overall goal by the end of the year.

For Example: The overall goal is 10 percent (4 percent race neutral; 6 percent race conscious).

It is easy if you are advertising only one construction or professional services contract during the fiscal year. Your contract goal is the race-conscious portion of your overall DBE goal (6 percent in our example). For detailed guidance on this, refer to Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 26.51(e)-(f).

What if you have multiple advertisements for construction and/or professional services during a fiscal year?

For Example: The overall goal is 10 percent (4 percent race neutral, 6 percent race conscious)

You have three Airport Improvement Program-funded projects: \$1 million, \$2 million, and \$2 million..

The regulations set the following parameters on your contract goal setting:

- In 49 CFR 26.51(e)(2) you will find a minimum threshold: You must set contract goals so that they will cumulatively result in meeting the race-conscious portion of your goal.

In our example then, at a minimum, your contract goals must ensure that 6 percent of your AIP funds are awarded to DBE's. Options include, but are not limited to: a 6-percent goal on each project; a 15-percent goal on a \$2-million project, and no goals on the other projects; 7.5-percent goals on both \$2-million projects, and none on the \$1-million project; or any other combination that will ensure you meet the 6 percent (i.e., \$300,000 in AIP funds) race-conscious goal.

- Additionally, 49 CFR 26.51(f)(2) requires you to monitor your performance throughout the year. During the course of the year, if you determine that you will exceed your overall goal, you must reduce or eliminate the use of contract goals to the extent necessary to ensure that the use of contract goals does not result in exceeding the overall goal.

In our example, if you bid the projects with a 6-percent goal and attained 10 percent on one of the \$2-million projects, you already would have attained \$200,000 of the \$300,000 goal. Your contract goals on the remaining two advertisements cannot be any more than required to get the remaining \$100,000. Your options may include setting a 2-percent goal on the \$1-million project, and 4 percent on the \$2-million project.

- In contrast, if, during the course of the year, you determine that you will fall short of your overall goal, then you must make appropriate modifications in your use of race-neutral and/or race-conscious measures, to allow you to meet the overall goal.

In our example, if you bid the \$2-million project with a 6-percent goal and you attain only 2 percent, then you must adjust contract goals on the future projects upward, to allow you to get the remaining \$260,000 of DBE participation.

We do not approve contract goals; however, if you have questions or need assistance in setting your contract goals, please contact Joelle Briggs at (425) 227-2097 or Christine Whitehead at (425) 227-2095.

— Joelle Briggs

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Interagency teamwork hurries needed supplies to the hurricane-stricken residents of Florida

Charlie, Francis, Ivan, Jeanne – all reminders of this year’s particularly active and devastating hurricane season in the southeastern United States. Many homes were lost, and people were left without food, water, and electricity. The residents of Florida desperately needed aid, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) responded. But, the needs were greater than the available manpower. So, FEMA asked the Department of Transportation (DOT) to assist in the delivery of relief supplies.



The Denver Airports District Office, where I am a civil engineer managing Part 150 projects for Colorado, Utah and Wyoming, wanted to support this mission. So, I and many other FAA employees volunteered to pack our bags and head to the storm-stricken areas to aid the emergency response efforts. Other volunteer organizations included the Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forestry Service, and Landstar Trucking Company. (Pictured left is Pensacola Beach, Florida, September 18, 2004--Damage and debris from Hurricane Ivan. Photo by Jocelyn Augustino, courtesy of the FEMA web site.)

I was positioned at an Emergency Support Function Office located at the top of a large hangar at the Jacksonville Naval Air Station, Florida. The facility was in charge of receiving, staging, and delivering emergency commodities to needy local communities. The scale of the operation was immediately impressive, and there was an astounding level of coordination

needed to keep the operation going.

The specific responsibility of DOT employees was to track thousands of semi-trucks all over Florida, to ensure the delivery of each commodity to the location where it was needed most. The trucks were filled with all types of necessities: bottled water, ice, military meals ready-to-eat, generators, batteries, emergency office supplies, diapers, and more. When I left Jacksonville, more than 25 million pounds of emergency relief supplies had been distributed from the base.

Some of the hardest working, and most deserving of recognition, volunteers on site were from the U. S. Forestry Service and Landstar Trucking. Forestry employees from all over America put in countless hours of grunt work, to load each truck to transport the needed supplies. The truck drivers were on call 24 hours, ready to manage shipments at a moment’s notice. Their nights constantly were cut short, yet they somehow maintained a very high safety rating and always got the shipments where they were needed.

While I was positioned in Jacksonville, tropical storm Jeanne moved through. Many who had never been through a storm of its magnitude took every precaution. I rode out the storm in my hotel room, where I had two cases of bottled water, a cooler full of ice, and enough food to feed a small army. The storm resulted in little damage, compared to the previous hurricanes. The power was on and off, but ultimately was restored permanently just hours after the storm cleared. A tree was uprooted in front of my hotel, and debris littered the area. The most severe event occurred at the hotel of one of my hurricane co-workers, when a section of the hotel roof ripped off and landed just feet from his rental car. Meanwhile, the people of Florida barely batted an eye. With everything they already had been through this hurricane season, Jeanne was barely a blip on the radar!

My time in Florida was both educational and rewarding. I had the fortune of working with many dedicated and benevolent people from diverse backgrounds. It was great to see so many people from all over the United States come together to complete such a needed and successful mission.

— Kevin Luey

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Stevensville Airport gets long-awaited wildlife fence

Stevensville Airport in Montana is located a few miles out of town, upon a bench that overlooks the Bitterroot River and the nearby Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge. The airport is one of Montana's five busiest and fastest-growing general-aviation facilities, with more than 50-based aircraft. There is a price to pay for the impressive location and statistics, however. Stevensville has had five deer strikes by aircraft in less than 10 years. Fortunately, in human factors, none were fatal or involved serious injuries. But, severe aircraft damage has been sustained.

As you might guess, deer, antelope, and elk roaming throughout the state of Montana is commonplace. Much of the state is like a wildlife refuge. But, at certain seasons of the year, deer and other wildlife are either driven out of their normal habitats or for other reasons move from one wildlife refuge to another. This has resulted in a somewhat large-scale wildlife movement that often crosses through the airport, typically at night or in periods of low visibility.

It became obvious that a fence would be the solution at Stevensville, but it was just as obvious that there would be many obstacles to overcome with a proposed project such as this. For instance, the runway was too close to the property line to permit a tall fence and clear, protected surfaces. A ridge of high ground parallel to the runway further magnified the problem. Land had to be acquired to achieve the needed separation and remove the high ground. The airport also was in the process of upgrading from category B-I to B-II, including future instrumentation, as a result of recent planning efforts. This required an even wider protected runway environment, and more land. All of this would take capital. Yet, they could provide only limited financial support for airport development.

In the interim, while the deer and antelope played, and the town was still working to acquire financing, land developers were eyeing the high ground around the airport for its spectacular view of the nearby Bitterroot Mountain Range. Subdivision proposals sprang up, including one filed in the area of the future airport expansion. The airport board then recognized the pending dilemma, to either move forward or lose the opportunity, and successfully acquired a combination of local user and state matching funds for the needed land/fence project.

The Federal Aviation Administration issued an Airport Improvement Program grant of nearly \$900,000 in 2001, for both land acquisition and 19,000 feet of fence. But, it took 3 years to acquire the requisite 82 acres of land. By that time, the original bid for the fence was considerably off, due to skyrocketing steel prices. The lowest bid submitted by several fence contractors was nearly double the original cost estimate. A grant amendment pushed the total project cost to more than a million dollars.

The project was completed this past summer. It included removing the high ground and installing a 9-foot-high wildlife perimeter fence that is below all protected surfaces. Stevensville Airport now joins a number of other general-aviation airports in the state that are protected with perimeter wildlife fencing, resulting in a much safer airport for the flying public.

— John Styba

New Certalert advises most effective method to deal with hazards to aircraft by mammals

Certalert 04-15, "Deer Hazard to Aircraft and Deer Fencing," was published on December 13, 2004. This advisory describes the increase in the deer population in the United States and the hazards to aircraft from deer and other large mammals. (Pictured right, a deer grazes on vegetation.)

The Certalert also describes the fence design that has proved to be effective in controlling large animals. The document can be found at <http://www.faa.gov/arp/certification/certalert.cfm>.

— Matt Cavanaugh



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A List of New Advisory Circulars to Reference

November 10, 2004:

The Airport System Planning Process, AC 150/5070-7
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs-5070-7>

October 29, 2004:

Change 8 of AC 150/5300-13, Airport Design
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs-5300-13chg8>

October 20, 2004:

AC 150/5390-2B, Heliport Design
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5390-2>

October 18, 2004:

Updated Addendum to AC 150/5345-53B, Airport Lighting Equipment Certification Program
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5345-53>

October 5, 2004:

AC 150/5345-56, Specification for L-890 Airport Lighting Control and Monitoring System (ALCMS)
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5345-56>

September 21, 2004:

Change 2 of AC 150/5320-12C, Measurement, Construction, and Maintenance of Skid Resistant Airport Pavement Surfaces
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5320-12>

September 7, 2004:

Change 3 of AC 150/5320-12C, Measurement, Construction, and Maintenance of Skid Resistant Airport Pavement Surfaces
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5320-12>

August 19, 2004:

AC 150/5345-44G, Specification for Runway and Taxiway Signs
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5345-44>

July 27, 2004:

AC 150/5200-33A, Hazardous Wildlife Attractants on or Near Airports
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5200-33>

July 23, 2004:

AC 150/5230-4A, Aircraft Fuel Storage, Handling, and Dispensing on Airports
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5230-4>

July 20, 2004:

AC 150/5210-6D, Aircraft Fire and Rescue Facilities and Extinguishing Agents
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5210-6>

July 19, 2004:

AC 150/5320-17, Airfield Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating Manuals
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5320-17>

July 16, 2004:

AC 150/5345-28E, Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) Systems
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5345-28>

June 2, 2004:

AC 150/5345-27D, FAA Specification for Wind Cone Assemblies
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5345-27>

May 27, 2004:

AC 150/5200-35, Submitting the Airport Master Record in Order to Activate a New Airport
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5200-35>

May 7, 2004:

AC 150/5200-18C, Airport Safety Self-Inspection
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5200-18>

May 6, 2004:

AC 150/5210-22, Airport Certification Manual (ACM)
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5210-22>

AC 150/5320-6D, Change 3, Airport Pavement Design and Evaluation
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5320-6>

AC 150/5340-30, Design and Installation Details for Airport Visual Aids
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5340-30>

May 5, 2004:

AC 150/5100-19C, Guide for Airport Financial Reports Filed by Airport Sponsors
<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?APRnav=acs#5100-19>

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After 28 years of dedicated and outstanding service, Airports bids fair winds and following seas to Jack Hutchison

December 30th will mark the last day of federal government work for Jack Hutchison. After 28 years of service to the FAA in both Airports Division and the regional Human Resources Division, and another 6 years with the Department of the Army, Jack has decided to leave his Compliance and Certification duties to the rest of us.

Jack says he has lots of projects to do around the house, and looks forward to spending more time with his family and maybe even getting a little boating in as well.

We will all miss Jack's positive attitude and extensive knowledge. His help and advice have been invaluable both here and nationally.

We all wish Jack our very best wishes and congratulations on his retirement.



Pictured above, Jack accepts the traditional retirement plaque from Lowell Johnson, Manager, Airports Division

Helena ADO bids farewell to student engineer

Just before Thanksgiving, the staff of the Helena Airports District Office (ADO) bade farewell to Raquel DeBlauw, who left to concentrate more on her studies, in order to graduate in May 2005. Raquel is a senior at Carroll College in Helena, Montana, majoring in civil engineering.

During her 14 months in the office, Raquel primarily assisted in the review of airport layout plans (ALP) and project closeout processes. In addition to these, she also reconciled airport master record data with airport master plans, updated the ALP database, verified and corrected runway-end coordinates in the airspace database, and prepared payment requests for processing.

In departing, Raquel told us she definitely had enjoyed her experience in the ADO, where she gained extensive knowledge about the consultant and government sector, and how things actually work. She was surprised at the level of communications required between the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), airport sponsors, consultants, and various other government offices. She said the internship experience will continue to benefit her in the future. Raquel stated that one of the challenges within the FAA is trying to learn all of the acronyms we are accustomed to using. She said they all sounded like Greek to an outsider, such as she. We will have to work on that, ASAP!

What we have learned from our experience with Raquel is that student engineers have a lot to offer. Our staff was able to accomplish a lot, because of her contributions to our office. As a result, we have published an announcement to recruit another engineering student early next year.

We wish Raquel every success as she pursues future plans to attend graduate school and study either transportation or structures, or whatever line of work she pursues.

— Dave Stelling

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