

May 22, 2003

# **AIRPORT OBSTRUCTIONS STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

## **PURPOSE**

The Airport Obstructions Standards Committee (AOSC) is committed to harmonizing FAA airport obstruction policy. The AOSC is charged with developing a transition strategy to guide the application of obstruction standards for airports and operations where standards previously were not applied consistently, or operations were approved under older standards. The AOSC serves as the vehicle transforming outdated, inconsistent obstruction standards practices to future policy that optimally balances operational safety, effectiveness, and economic benefit.

## **BACKGROUND**

Standards and policy covering airport obstructions evolved independently from several FAA organizations. In many instances, these standards were not coordinated well, and as a result they are inconsistent and at cross-purposes. While well intended and suited for addressing specific problems, these singular practices when taken as a whole present the airport and aircraft operator with a confusing picture, one not readily conducive to cooperative compliance and a higher level of safety.

As the aviation community simultaneously strives for increased operational capability and improved safety at many major airports, difficult issues emerge. Efficiently minimizing obstructions on and around airports, that undermine safe flight operations, are a multidimensional challenge. Incorporating advisory circular standards into the Code of Federal Regulations Title 14, Part 97, Section 20, U.S. Standard for Terminal Instrument Approach Procedures (TERPS), can have unintended impacts on airport and aircraft operators. Safety initiatives to reduce runway incursions through installation of perimeter taxiways and taller control towers present questions regarding TERPS protected airspace.

## **OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE**

This committee provides a forum for the various Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) lines of business to discuss and resolve issues associated with airport obstruction standards and TERPS policies. It provides a vehicle for developing resolutions and processes to facilitate the evolution of safe and efficient airport flight operations. A major task of the committee is to clarify the relationship between instrument flight operations capability and the airport obstruction environment. The general goal of the committee is to develop a means to implement improvements in airport flight operations with an optimal balance among safety, capacity, and efficiency.

Specifically, the AOSC is established to address recent AFS/AVN policies affecting airports:

1. The Precision Obstruction Free Area (POFA) at St Louis and other Operations Evolution Plan (OEP) airports with significant Category II/III instrument approach conditions.
2. The effect of the Obstacle Free Zone (OFZ) and the Obstacle Clearance Surface (OCS) on runway/taxiway separation.
3. Siting criteria for perimeter or end-around taxiways, particularly the minimum distance from the runway end.
4. The effect of air traffic control towers (ATCT) greater than 300 ft in height (“Super Towers”) on instrument protected surfaces, and adverse impact on instrument approach minimums.
5. Clarifying criteria for accomplishing obstacle surveys, especially the requirements for commercial surveyors to certify to FAA standards.
6. The transition process including timeframes for complying with TERPS paragraph 251 covering night time procedures.
7. Conducting expanded analysis of obstacle/airspace/safety relationships, especially updated collision risk models (CRM) for airport surfaces.
8. Appropriate measures for achieving compliance with obstruction standards at non-obligated airports (non-Part 139).
9. Improved headquarters guidance/direction to assure integrated participation of associate lines of business throughout the airport construction planning process.

## **ORGANIZATION**

**AOSC-SG:** Airport Obstructions Standards Committee-Steering Group – FAA Associate Administrator-level group providing strategic direction and functional guidance for the AOSC. Headed by the Assistant Administrator for Regions and Center Operations (ARC-1), the AOSC-SG includes the Associate Administrators for: Research and Acquisitions (ARA-1), Airports (ARP-1), Air Traffic Services (ATS-1), and Regulation and Certification (AVR-1).

**AOSC:** Airport Obstructions Standards Committee – Internal effort aimed at bridging gaps between ARP, ATS, ARC, and AVR by clarifying, de-conflicting, and developing consistent FAA understanding, policy, and practice regarding all FAA airport obstruction standards, orders, advisory circulars, and rules. Associate Administrators designate committee members with requisite expertise as necessary to participate on the AOSC.

**AOSC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** AVR designates an Executive Director to provide day-to-day facilitation of AOSC activities.

AOSC STEERING GROUP APPROVED:

Ruth Leverenz  
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Assistant Administrator for Regions and Centers, ARC-1

Date MAY 20 2003

Nick Sabatini  
Nicholas Sabatini  
Associate Administrator for Regulation and Certification, AVR-1

Date 5/30/03

for: Paul L. Galis  
Woodie Woodward  
Associate Administrator for Airports, ARP-1

Date 6/4/03

Steve Brown  
Steve Brown *for*  
Associate Administrator for Air Traffic Services, ATS-1

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Charlie Keegan  
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Associate Administrator for Research and Acquisitions, ARA-1

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