



Vanquishing the V/PD

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This publication is primarily directed towards airport management to be disseminated to all levels of personnel working at your airfield. It does not matter how large or how small your airfield or how tight your budget may be, this information must be made available to your people by whatever means. Vanquishing the V/PD can be accomplished through a solid partnership between the FAA and airport management. The responsibility of making sure that the proper safeguards are in place; however, lies squarely on the shoulders of the airport management. Please use this information and all that follows as a guide by which to produce a safer environment at your airfield.

It was a Tuesday afternoon. The weather was clear, 20+ miles visibility and 78 degrees Fahrenheit when the tower cleared the Cessna 172 for takeoff. The pilot began his takeoff roll when, without warning, a white Chevy truck entered the runway 1200 feet in front of the departing aircraft. The tower immediately cancelled the takeoff clearance and the Cessna 172 stopped after rolling 200 feet. The truck made a U-turn and exited the runway. It was later stopped by airport personnel.

The investigation of the incident revealed the following:

An airport tenant, who was leasing a hangar at the general aviation (GA) airport, broke the terms of his lease and was running a non-aviation business in his hangar. After being told by airport management to remove all business related property from the hangar, the tenant escorted a moving company onto the airport, using his access card to allow the movers entry through the security gate. By his own admission, the tenant left the movers

alone to “have some drinks, some chips and salsa” with friends at another hangar. The movers completed the loading and decided to let themselves off of the airfield. They blundered onto the active runway and conflicted with the departing aircraft.

Who was responsible for this runway incursion? Was it the truck driver, the tenant, airport management or the FAA? The answer is simple; we are ALL responsible.

Improperly escorted vehicles and pedestrians now account for the majority of V/PDs at GA airports in the Western-Pacific Region. Following a few simple best practices regarding escorting could have prevented this and other V/PD related runway incursions:

- Escorts are responsible for the actions of their guests
- Escorts are responsible for guests during the entire time they are on the airfield
- If you allow someone onto the airfield through a security gate you have automatically become their escort
- If you do not want to assume the responsibility of being an escort then do not allow those persons onto the airfield
- Do not allow an escorted vehicle to break away from your supervision
- When escorting another vehicle in the movement area always inform ATC that you are a “party of two”
- Never allow delivery trucks onto the airfield and then “point the way” to their destination
- If you improperly escort individuals, you are putting their lives in danger

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