



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

InFO

Information for Operators

InFO 08052
DATE: 10/29/08

Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info

An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.

Subject: Potential shortage of potassium acetate (KAc)-based runway deicer fluid (RDF) for the 2008/09 winter season.

Purpose: To advise airplane operators of the potential of severe shortage of RDF for the winter season 2008/2009, which may impact an airplane operator's ability to safely operate during winter storm conditions at some airports.

Discussion: Due to labor disputes at the mining facilities of the raw materials used in potassium acetate based RDF, it is expected that approximately 60% less RDF will be available this winter season than last year. Additionally the costs of available RDF have gone up more than three fold since last year. These two conditions increase the likelihood that RDF may not be available, or may be used more sparingly than in the past. It is possible that runways may not be able to be maintained to the same level as previous years during winter storms. An airport operator may choose to treat a limited number of runway surfaces, affecting the acceptance and departure rate at the airport. The airport operator may also choose not to treat the same width of runway surfaces as in previous years and may not treat taxiways and ramp areas at all.

Recommended Action: Each operator should alert its pilots, dispatchers/flight followers and station personnel of the potential shortage of RDF, and the effect it may have on safe and timely operations during winter storm events this winter season. Each operator should insure it has adequate procedures for appropriate operations personnel to evaluate airport surface conditions and the airport's availability and planned use of RDF if necessary. Each operator should have alternate procedures if the use of RDF is necessary to raise the intended airport surface condition to an acceptable level for safe operation and none is available. If the reduced availability of RDF is likely to affect the intended or alternate airport capacity, each operator should assure it has developed appropriate flight planning procedures to consider potential delays.