

CertAlert

DOT/Federal Aviation Administration, Southern Region Airports Division,
Airport Certification Safety Team (ASO-620), P.O. Box 20636, Atlanta, Georgia 30320
(404) 305-6700; FAX: (404) 305-6730

January 27, 2009

Number SO-09-01

Update to Airport Winter Safety and Operations AC

Advisory Circular 150/5200-30C (Airport Winter Safety and Operations) has recently been updated with a major change that requires 14 CFR Part 139 Airport Operators to initiate runway closures when the following circumstances occur:

1. A NIL pilot braking action report (PIREP), or NIL braking action assessment by the airport operator requires the runway to be closed before the next flight operation. The runway must remain closed until the airport operator is satisfied that the NIL condition no longer exists.
2. When previous PIREPs have indicated GOOD or MEDIUM (FAIR) braking action, two consecutive POOR PIREPs should be taken as evidence that surface conditions may be deteriorating and require the airport operator to conduct a runway assessment. If the airport operator has not already instituted its continuous monitoring procedures, this assessment must occur before the next operation. If the airport operator is already continuously monitoring runway conditions, this assessment must occur as soon as traffic volume allows, in accordance with the airports snow and ice control plan.
3. The airport operator must take all reasonable steps using all available equipment and materials that are appropriate for the condition to improve the braking action. If the runway can not be improved, the airport operator must continuously monitor the runway to ensure braking action does not become NIL.
4. Airport operators with an Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) should formalize a Letter of Agreement (LOA) between the airport operator and ATCT. At a minimum, the LOA should specify how all pilot braking action reports (PIREPs) of "POOR" and "NIL" are to be immediately transmitted to the airport operator for action. It should also include an agreement on actions by Air Traffic personnel for immediate cessation of operations upon receipt of a "NIL" PIREP. Should an airport have other parties responsible for receiving PIREPs (i.e. FBOs monitoring Unicom Frequency), the airport operator should also have a formalized LOA in place between those respective parties similar to the LOA between ATCT and the Airport.

5. Upon the publication date of this Advisory Circular, all 14 CFR Part 139 Airport operations are immediately required to follow the requirements of paragraph 5-6 (Requirements for Runway Closures) and paragraph 5-7 (Continuous Monitoring Procedures). Additionally, 14 CFR Part 139 Airport Operators must submit a revised Snow and Ice Control Plan (SICP) to the FAA ***no later than April 30, 2009*** for approval.

The Airport Certification Safety Team