



Federal Aviation Administration

National Part 139 CertAlert

AdvisoryCautionary**Non-Directive**Advisory**Cautionary**Non-Directive**Advisory**Cautionary**Non-Directive**

DATE: 02/15/2011 **No. 11-03**
TO: Airport Operators, FAA Airport Certification Safety Inspectors
Subj: Clarification on Winter Operations Pavement Assessment Reporting in the NOTAM System
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1. **Purpose.** This CertAlert provides information and recommendations to airport operators on:
 - a. Reporting the results of friction assessments of contaminated surfaces during winter operations,
 - b. How to report the resulting Mu values in the Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) system,
 - c. NOTAM language to publish for snow removal activities,
 - d. Reporting changing conditions via Pilot Reports (PIREPs), and
 - e. When airport operators can classify conditions as “patchy”.
2. **Friction Assessments.** During snow events at Part 139 certificated airports, airport operators may be in a state of continuous snow removal operations. Snowfall conditions can change faster than the airport operator’s ability to report them. The FAA requires that Part 139 certificated airports issue, monitor, and update NOTAMs in a timely manner to most accurately describe the surface conditions. We encourage airport operators to work with their tenants to help them understand and interpret NOTAMs to avoid confusion. For example, airports may wish to consider using the required annual Snow and Ice Control Committee meeting as a venue to brief tenants on NOTAM procedures.
3. **Reporting Mu Values in the NOTAM System.** The most current version of Advisory Circular 150/5200-30, Airport Winter Safety and Operations, states that airport operators conducting a condition assessment using friction measuring equipment can report Mu values via the NOTAM system. Continued transmittal of Mu values in the NOTAM system is permissible, with the understanding that the specific numerical value has no particular significant other than to provide changing runway condition trend information when associated with previous or subsequent runway friction measurement values. Airport operators are cautioned against using Mu values as their sole indicator of winter runway slipperiness. Airport operators should report Mu values in accordance with the following provisions:

- a. Airport operators must cancel any Mu NOTAMs when the condition NOTAM moves outside the parameters for taking a friction assessment. These parameters are defined in paragraph 5-3(a) of Advisory Circular 150/5200-30:
 - i. *Conditions Acceptable to Use Decelerometers or Continuous Friction Measuring Equipment to Conduct Runway Friction Surveys on Frozen Contaminated Surfaces. The data obtained from such runway friction surveys are only considered to be reliable when the surface is contaminated under any of the following conditions:*
 - (1) *Ice or wet ice. Wet ice is a term used to define ice surfaces that are covered with a thin film of moisture caused by melting. The liquid water film deposit is of minimal depth of 0.04 inch (1 mm) or less, insufficient to cause hydroplaning.*
 - (2) *Compacted snow at any depth.*
 - (3) *Dry snow 1 inch or less.*
 - (4) *Wet snow or slush 1/8 inch or less.*

It is not acceptable to use decelerometers or continuous friction measuring equipment to assess any contaminants outside of these parameters.
- b. The most current version of FAA Order JO 7930.2, Notices to Airmen, states that NOTAMs will not be issued if all readings are above the value 40. If a NOTAM was issued and the airport manager advises that the readings are above 40, the previous NOTAM will be cancelled.
- c. If any of the three Mu values for each third of the runway is below 40, and the remaining Mu values are above 40, then airport operators should report all three Mu values numbers.
 - i. ***Airport operators should report Mu values below 40 at their measured value and values at 40 or above as 40.***
- d. NOTE: We now recommend that any Mu value above 40 be reported as 40. Currently, the AC states on page 43, paragraph 5-5.a (1), Note 1, that values above 40 should be reported as 40+. This conflicts with FAA Order JO 7930.2, Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs). We intend to change the AC with an errata sheet in the interim. The reason for this change is that research has found there is no safety benefit from reporting higher specific Mu values.
- e. Airport operators should issue a NOTAM on the operational capability of their friction measuring equipment only when the airport has NO friction measuring equipment in operational order.

4. NOTAM Language for Snow Removal Activity and General NOTAM Formatting.

- a. Airport operators can use the following example NOTAM language for various surfaces:
 - i. AD Work In Progress Snow Removal On All Surfaces
 - ii. RWY 18/36 Work In Progress Snow Removal

- iii. TWY A, B, C Work In Progress Snow Removal
 - iv. APRON (Ramp Name) Work In Progress Snow Removal
 - b. Airport operators should ensure the NOTAM remains active only when actual snow and ice removal operations are taking place.
 - c. Airport operators should not issue this type of NOTAM for blanket extended periods (e.g., November through December).
 - d. We do not recommend using the code for personnel and equipment working (PAEW). This code requires airport operators to specify locations on the airfield, which is a problem because snow removal operations move around the airfield, requiring multiple NOTAM entries.
 - e. When developing NOTAMs, airport operators should use the format and abbreviations described in:
 - i. Advisory Circular 150/5200-28, Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) for Airport Operators,
 - ii. FAA Order 7930.2, Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs), and
 - iii. FAA Order 7340.1, Contractions.
 - f. When addressing winter operations (NOTAMs, snow removal plans, etc.), we encourage airport operators to use their Airport Snow and Ice Control Committee to address the needs of airport users.
- 5. Pilot Reports (PIREP) Actions.** When an airport is open without an operating control tower, the FAA recommends airport operators disseminate any PIREP received. For additional guidance on PIREPs relating to winter operations, please refer to:
- a. FAA Order 7110.65, Air Traffic Control,
http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices/index.cfm/go/document.current/documentNumber/7110.65
 - b. Advisory Circular 150/5200-30, Airport Winter Safety and Operations,
http://www.faa.gov/airports/resources/advisory_circulars/index.cfm/go/document.current/documentNumber/150_5200-30
- 6. Defining “Patchy” Conditions.** CertAlert 09-13, Aircraft Surface Excursions During Winter Operations, states that only contaminant conditions that covers 25% or less of the cleared/treated/usable surface may be classified as “Patchy”. Conditions covering more than 25% should be considered as covering the total surface area for surface condition reporting purposes.



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