



Federal Aviation Administration

National Part 139 CertAlert

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

Date: September 4, 2012 **No.12-06**

To: Part 139 Airport Operators and FAA Airport Certification Safety Inspectors

Subject: Ground Vehicle Operations on Airports – Increase in the Numbers of Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations (V/PDs) and Runway Incursions (RIs) in the Last Two Quarters of FY 2012

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The FAA Office of Safety and Operations and the FAA Runway Safety Office have noted a slow but steady increase in the numbers of Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations and Runway Incursions during the second and third quarters of fiscal year 2012. These increasing numbers have resulted in serious Runway Incursions that in some instances narrowly averted catastrophic consequences. Whether the increase is a result of increased reporting, a longer construction season, or airport congestion, this trend needs to be addressed by all the stakeholders in the airport environment.

The Office of Airport Safety and Operations is making the following suggestions. Airport operators should evaluate any Runway Incursion trends, and consider using these suggestions as appropriate.

AIRPORT OPERATORS:

- A. Conduct a comprehensive review of the Airport Drivers Training Program and Vehicle Access Procedures. Continue to emphasize that only those vehicles and vehicle operators necessary to conduct airport/air carrier operations are authorized on the ramp and movement areas.
- B. Review each Letter of Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding involving vehicles and vehicle operators with other federal agencies, airport tenants, and airport contractors. Ensure only essential vehicles have access to the movement areas or Runway Safety Areas (RSAs).
- C. If practical, reduce the numbers of non-essential or infrequent vehicle operators to lessen the airport's exposure and risk for V/PDs and RIs. For example, an airport may wish to review and limit a tenant's operational area to further reduce accidental access to the movement area. Pay special attention to vehicle operators that infrequently use the airport. Implementation of escort procedures may reduce the risk of these individuals being involved in a V/PD or RI.
- D. Review current and proposed Construction Safety Phasing Plans to ensure adequate airport oversight for construction site(s), construction vehicles, and construction personnel, especially during air carrier operations near runways and taxiways. The FAA recommends a "Continuous

Inspection” program when the airport has adequate staffing. V/PDs involving construction and contractor vehicles on airports are up over 120 percent compared to last year.

- E. Implement periodic vehicle spot checks by airport operations staff or associated airport law enforcement officer to raise awareness of safe vehicle operations on the ramp areas, movement areas, and RSAs.
- F. Ensure all vehicles operating in movement areas and RSAs are equipped in accordance with the airport’s policies, including an airport diagram, the FAA’s Sign and Marking placard, and any airport specific vehicle operating procedures.
- G. Ensure the airport operator and the local Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) have a formalized agreement addressing the part 139 prohibition of vehicles, men, and equipment in the RSA during air carrier operations.
- H. Ensure vehicle operators are using the appropriate aviation terminology when communicating with the local ATCT. Incorporate the term “off” the runway or “off” the taxiway in the Airport Drivers Training Program, rather than the air traffic control (ATC) term “clear” to avoid any confusion when ATC is communicating with an aircraft operator.
- I. Ensure vehicle drivers have a way to communicate with the tower. Almost one-quarter of V/PDs involve vehicles with no communication.
- J. Streamline radio communication procedures to prevent the requirement to monitor more than one frequency while operating in the movement area. When vehicle operators monitor more than one radio frequency, more than one radio, and/or use a cellular telephone, it is easy to lose “situational awareness.” To the extent practical, limit these situations to avoid overwhelming vehicle operators. For example, the airport might prohibit other cell phone use in the movement area.
- K. Airports should consider a graduated penalty program for violations of its policy, including retraining, fines, and other deterrents.
- L. Additional information, current news, important messages, and training aids can also be found at the following website: http://www.faa.gov/airports/runway_safety/
- M. Best Practices for Vehicle Drivers
 1. Review and understand airfield signage and markings.
 2. Review the airport diagram before moving the vehicle. Have the airport diagram out and available for immediate reference while driving in the operational area.
 3. Review current airfield information for any taxiway closures, runway closures, construction activity, or other surface risks.
 4. Ensure appropriate vehicle lights (high beams, flashers, beacons, and strobes) are operational before driving in the operational area. Flashers and beacons help ATC, aircrew, and other vehicle operators see vehicles in the operational area, especially during periods of reduced visibility and at night.
 5. Use service roads whenever possible to minimize time spent on taxiways and runways.
 6. During radio transmissions, use correct terminology and proper voice cadence.

7. Copy your clearance and review the assigned route. Read back all clearances.
8. Eliminate distractions while driving in the operational area. Do not use cell phones while driving in the operational area.
9. Focus attention and have your "eyes out" of the vehicle.
10. Maintain appropriate speed.



September 4, 2012

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