



**FAA
Great Lakes Region, Airports Division
Safety Standards Branch**

Airport Certification Information Bulletin (ACIB) 2011-3



Subject: Best Practices for Winter Operations

Maintain Situational Awareness

- Train for low visibility and white out conditions to include special provisions to cease snow removal operations when visibility impairs a driver's ability to safely navigate.
- Set standards for how long a driver can operate on the airfield to minimize fatigue.
- Minimize distractions such as telephones or unessential radios during snow removal operations.
- Ensure airfield guidance signs and mandatory hold signs are clearly visible and operational. If snow or ice can not be promptly removed, ensure appropriate NOTAMs are in place to identify obscured and or missing signs.

Vehicle Lighting & Visibility

- Vehicles should use all available lighting to ensure they are visible.

Communications

- Communicate intentions; read back clearances; call clear as required.
- Use Proper Phraseology.
- **At Controlled Airfields**, periodically check in with ATC to reconfirm ATC clearances.
- **At Uncontrolled Airfields**, vehicle operators should continually self-announce positions and intentions.

Operational Safety

- It is encouraged to close runways for snow removal operations via NOTAM when personnel and equipment will occupy the runway for an extended period of time.
- Provide timely and accurate Airfield Condition Reporting.
- Issue NOTAMs as appropriate.
- Communicate airfield conditions with ATCT and users.
- Update – any change of conditions with particular emphasis on rapidly changing conditions.
- Institute continuous monitoring procedures when required.
- Nil Braking is an unsafe condition. Close runway immediately until conditions can be verified and conditions are improved.
- While not always obtainable, the goal should be to maintain all operational surfaces to no worse than wet conditions.

Reminder: Airport operators have the sole responsibility in deciding when a runway is to be opened or closed.