



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

# Memorandum

Subject: **ACTION:** Program Guidance Letter 12-06  
Initial Program on FOD Detection Systems

Date: **JUN 19 2012**

Reply to Nancy S. Williams  
Attn. of: 202-267-8822

From: Manager, Airports Financial Assistance Division,  
APP-500

To: PGL Distribution List

This Program Guidance Letter (PGL) addresses the eligibility of Foreign Object Debris (FOD) detection equipment.

For Fiscal Year 2012, the Office of Airport Planning and Programming is limiting AIP Discretionary grants FOD detection systems to 3 large hub primary airports. There is a July 16, 2012, deadline by when Regional Airports Offices may submit information on candidate airports to APP-1. A decision will be made by APP-1, in consultation with the Office of Airport Safety and Standards (AAS) by August 8, 2012.

FAA Regional Airports Offices and Airports District Offices are encouraged to distribute this PGL widely to the airport and consultant community.

SOAR Code: ST EQ MS Acquire  
Equipment (Add description "FOD  
Detection Equipment")

On September 30, 2009, FAA published Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5220-24, Airport Foreign Object Debris (FOD) Detection Equipment (the AC). The AC specifies the requirements for FOD detection equipment at airports.

**FOD Detection Equipment is eligible for AIP grant funds.** The FAA Office of Airport Safety and Standards (AAS) has determined that FOD detection equipment contributes "significantly to the safety of individuals and property" at an airport as described in 49 USC 47102(3)(B)(ii). Accordingly, the Office of Airport Planning and Programming has determined that FOD detection equipment is eligible under the AIP if it meets the requirements set forth in the AC. However, airport sponsors must demonstrate that specific proposed FOD detection projects are also justified, on a case by case basis.

The FAA William J. Hughes Technical Center (Tech Center) analyzed the performance of the electro-optical FOD detection system, the radar-based FOD detection system, the hybrid radar/electro-optical FOD detection system, and the mobile, radar-based FOD detection systems. The performance assessment reports are available online at <http://actlibrary.tc.faa.gov>.

**Discretionary AIP Funding limited.** Due to reduced Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding authorization levels in the next four years (FY 2012-2015), FAA has limited the maximum reimbursement that will be allowable for both mobile and stationary FOD Detection Systems and is limiting AIP Discretionary grants in FY 2012 for FOD detection systems to 3 large hub primary airports. The FAA will make a determination in later years whether or not to extend funding for FOD detection systems to other airports.

The Regional Airport Offices must submit proposals by July 20, 2012, to the Office of Airport Planning and Programming, APP-1, for funding of systems based on the following:

- Evaluation criteria will include the following:
  - Number of aircraft operations per average 24-hour period for the selected runway;
  - Distribution of operations and percentage of airport departures over a 24-hour period on the selected runway;

- Percentage of widebody aircraft using selected runway per day and overall diversity of fleet-mix using the runway;
  - Surface material and condition of selected runway;
  - Climatic conditions at the airport;
  - Significant construction activity on or near the airfield;
  - If available, historical data of FOD at the airport and/or on the specific runway being considered;
  - Ability of the airport sponsor to implement the project swiftly.
- The FAA will fund either one stationary system for a single primary runway at the airport, or one mobile system.
  - The airport must agree to competitively bid the FOD detection system, and meet the requirements of 49 CFR Part 18, all AIP requirements for grant projects and all federal procurement rules.
  - The FAA will participate in 50% of the eligible items associated with the project at the normal federal share. During the application process, the FAA will work with the sponsor to identify which items will be included in the grant agreement. Reimbursement of administrative costs is limited to \$2,000, and this figure is not subject to inflation.
  - Acquisition of a mobile FOD detection system may also include the vehicle on which the equipment is mounted if the airport does not already own a suitable vehicle that can be converted to FOD detection system use. The use of the FOD detection vehicle shall be strictly limited to FOD detection. The maximum reimbursement for the vehicle is \$15,000, regardless of the type, size, or options selected for the vehicle. This figure is not subject to inflation.
  - Regardless of whether the systems are mobile or stationary, to be eligible under the AIP the system must meet the requirements set forth in Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5220-24 and must be configured to provide real time alerts, FOD identification, and FOD location to airport operations personnel.
  - The airport must continue to comply with all 14 CFR Part 139 requirements for detection and removal of FOD.

**Environmental processing.** The Office of Airport Planning and Programming has determined that installation of a FOD detection system is a categorically excluded action under paragraph 308e, FAA Order 1050.1, unless extraordinary circumstances exist (see paragraph 606, FAA Order 5050.4 (current version) that instead require the preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

**Buy American requirements.** For AIP-funded acquisition, the FOD Detection equipment must meet the requirements of 49 USC 50101, Buy American Preference Requirements FOD detection systems that meet the Buy American Preference Requirements are listed on the “Equipment Meeting Buy American Requirements” spreadsheet on the FAA website at the following address:

[http://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/buy\\_american/](http://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/buy_american/)

For mobile FOD detection systems, if the acquisition includes a vehicle then the ADO must make a separate determination that the vehicle meets the Buy American Preference requirements.

**Optional Features for FOD Detection Systems.** The FOD Detection Equipment System is required to meet the requirements listed in the Advisory Circular. Additional or optional features that exceed the system output requirements of the Advisory Circular are not reimbursable with AIP and the airport must not include these features as selection criteria in the procurement documents.