



## **Vanquishing the VPD**

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FAA Airports Office,  
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Vanquishing the Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviation...a lofty goal? Perhaps. Is it achievable? Definitely. With the proper education, vigilance and safeguards in place any airfield can help minimize VPDs and provide a safer environment for the flying public. This publication is primarily directed towards airport management to be disseminated to all levels of personnel working at your airfield. It does not matter how large or how small your airfield or how tight your budget may be, this information must be made available to your people by whatever means. Vanquishing the VPD can be accomplished through a solid partnership between the FAA and airport management. The responsibility of making sure safeguards are in place; however, lies squarely on the shoulders of the airport management. Please use this information and all that follows as a guide by which to produce a safer environment at your airfield.

First of all, let's get some general definitions out of the way:

### **What is a VPD?**

A VPD is a vehicle/pedestrian deviation which pertains to pedestrians, vehicles or other objects interfering with aircraft operations by entering or moving on the movement area without authorization from air traffic control. This includes mechanics taxiing aircraft for maintenance or gate re-positioning.

### **What is a Surface Incident?**

A surface incident is any event where unauthorized or unapproved movement occurs within the movement area, or an occurrence in the movement area associated with the operation of an aircraft that affects or could affect the safety of flight. A surface incident

can occur anywhere on the airport's surface, including the runway. A surface incident can be classified as either a runway incursion or a non-runway incursion.

## **What is a Runway Incursion?**

A runway incursion is “any occurrence in the airport runway environment involving an aircraft, vehicle person or object on the ground that creates a collision hazard or results in a loss of required separation with an aircraft taking off, intending to take off, landing or intending to land”.

By definition we can see that a VPD can result in a surface incident or a runway incursion and that is why vanquishing the VPD is of paramount concern to everyone operating in and about our nations airports.

After reviewing the VPDs for the last three months of 2005, it became clear that the majority of VPDs were a result of individuals unfamiliar with airport operations being on the airfield. Case in point: In November of 2005 at approximately 14:36 local time, the driver of a food catering truck was trying to locate an aircraft hangar at a towered airport with a map obtained from Map Quest. The driver made a wrong turn onto an active taxiway, headed northwest and crossed two active runways without clearance, necessitating a Piper Seneca on a mile and a half final to go around. How does something like this happen? The answer is rooted in the area of security. So how do the airports tighten security to help vanquish VPDs? Here are some simple guidelines airport operators can use to discourage unauthorized pedestrian access to movement areas:

1. Maintain a heightened awareness at the airfield directed towards those who seem unfamiliar with airfield procedures. Sometimes all it takes is a simple challenge like asking, “Can I help you?” to steer someone in the right direction or off of the airfield completely and out of harm's way.
2. Provide escorts for those who are not familiar with the airfield.
3. Develop a system of consequences for those tenants who share access cards or access codes, block open doors or “piggyback” through vehicle gates with those having no business on the field.
4. Inspect perimeter fences on a daily basis and fix potential breaches.
5. Install “buzzer locks” at flight school, airport lobbies or charter service doors leading to the airfield.
6. Provide remedial training or handout material containing airfield information to those who have business on the airfield but may be unfamiliar with procedures (delivery trucks, maintenance workers, utility workers, fuel delivery companies, food caterers, etc.).
7. Install and maintain proper marking and signage on the airfield, gates and perimeter fences.
8. Petition legislative bodies of the municipality, state and county to make State Vehicle Codes enforceable at municipal airports.

9. If a VPD occurs at your airfield, immediately dispatch Airfield Operations and/or Maintenance to conduct a visual inspection of the signage, lighting and pavement markings in the area to determine if they are all to standard.
10. Federal funding is available to certificated 139 airports as well as general aviation airports for airfield improvements. The Federal Government can fund a high percentage of the total cost relating to safety improvements at an airfield.

**WHO IS DOING THINGS RIGHT?**

The airport staff at Falcon Field in Mesa, Arizona have recently been very proactive in improving security at their airport and, as a consequence, we expect to see a dramatic reduction in the number of their VPDs. Future construction plans are already in motion aimed primarily at improving their airport design. All of their efforts will, undoubtedly, reap the benefits of a far safer airport. Congratulations to Falcon Field in Mesa Arizona.

**QUARTERLY STATISTICS**

**HOW ARE WE DOING?**

**Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviation Tracking in the Western-Pacific Region**

Calendar Quarter 2004				Calendar Quarter 2005			
Month	Vehicle	Pedestrian	V/PD	Month	Vehicle	Pedestrian	V/PD
Oct	0	3	3	Oct	*4	2	6
Nov	3	3	6	Nov	6	3	9
Dec	5	3	8	Dec	7	0	7
Total	8	9	17	Total	17	5	22

\*(Includes 1 mechanic/taxi)

Total V/PDs in the Western-Pacific Region in the calendar year 2004: 68

Total V/PDs in the Western-Pacific Region in the calendar year 2005: 79

Tracking statistics provided by the AT Quality Assurance website.

For more information Airport Managers may consult the following sources of information:

Airport Ground Vehicle Operations—An FAA Guide

[http://www.asy.faa.gov/safety\\_products/airportground/](http://www.asy.faa.gov/safety_products/airportground/)

Advisory Circular 150/5210-20, Ground Vehicle Operations on Airports

Note: Advisory Circulars can be accessed on the internet at:

<http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm>

14 CFR Part 139.329, Pedestrians and ground vehicles

Western-Pacific Region Runway Safety Program Website at

[http://www.awp.faa.gov/ops/runway\\_safety/index.html](http://www.awp.faa.gov/ops/runway_safety/index.html)

<http://www.faa.gov/runwaysafety/pdf/vpdrev.pdf>

California Vehicle Code, Section 21113, Driving or Parking on Public Grounds

FAA Order 5100.38C, Airport Improvement Program Handbook

<http://www.faa.gov/arp/financial/aip/5100-38C.pdf>

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