



# AIRPORTS QUARTERLY

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## FROM THE DIVISION MANAGER: The Regional and National Aviation Community and Hurricane Katrina

Hurricane Katrina reminded all of us how important our airport system is during a crisis. Katrina struck just as FAA was completing another successful year of managing the AIP and Airport Certification programs. Three days before Katrina made landfall, we paused from closing out our fiscal year 2005 programs to contact airports in the projected path of the hurricane to update emergency phone numbers and contact information.

It will take some time to fully assess the damage from Katrina. The largest two affected airports, New Orleans Louis Armstrong International and New Orleans Lakefront, suffered damage to the terminal build-

ings, electrical systems, ARFF stations, hangars and other parts of the airfields

Since the storm, we have received many calls from airport sponsors, consultants, and other FAA Airport division offices offering support. Your generous offers of assistance and your encouragement demonstrate how tenacious and resourceful we are when our regional airport system has been damaged.

Airfield Operations Specialists from the Houston Airport System responded first to the New Orleans crisis. They repaired fencing, airfield lighting, ARFF equipment, mowers, and a did a myriad of other chores. Their efforts have been



Kelvin L. Solco, P.E., MBA  
Manager, Southwest Region

phenomenal.

We still have a long way to go, and we may be calling on some of you to help. We have not forgotten about the rest of our airport system and my staff is still working diligently to continue to provide service to all of you.

We are so grateful to have you as airport partners. You are all heroes to us!

## Fall ACIP and Environmental Conference Nov 8

FAA Southwest Region Airports Division will host a one day conference on November 8, 2005, at the Doral Hotel and Golf Club in Fort Worth. "The theme of the conference is Airport Capital Improvement Planning and

associated environmental issues," said Kelvin L. Solco, Division Manager. "While the conference will expand on the topics we covered at our conference last fall, it will be valuable to all airport operators whether you came

last year or not."

Among the topics to be covered are timeframes for both the CIP/ACIP and environmental processes. For an agenda and registration information, see <http://faa.gov/arp/asw/>

### Inside this issue:

*Hurricane Damage Picture* 2-3  
*HAS VALE Grant, Mowing RSAs, OAC Recognized*

*FAA Staff News, Incursions Increase, CE Documentation Changes,* 4-5

*RSAs, AFFF, Capital Needs Update, New Noise Grant Condition* 6-7

*Updated Grant Assurances* 8

For up to date information on FAA's Hurricane Katrina relief efforts see [http://www.faa.gov/news/hurricane\\_katrina/](http://www.faa.gov/news/hurricane_katrina/).

## New Orleans Louis Armstrong International Airport After Hurricane Katrina



Pictures Courtesy of the New Orleans Louis Armstrong International Airport



## Houston Receives Nation's First VALE Grant



The City of Houston received the first grant in the nation under the new Voluntary Airport Low Emission (VALE) Program. The grant helped in the buy of 10 new hybrid-fueled vehicles. These vehicles are part of a larger effort by the City of Houston to

convert much of their overall fleet to low pollution emitting vehicles.

If your airport is in a non-attainment or maintenance area for air quality, you may be eligible for VALE funds. Air quality credits gained through the VALE Program may be applied to

future airport development actions, possibly avoiding a lengthy and costly air quality impact analysis and regulatory process. Contact your program manager for more information about the VALE Program.



## Mowing Runway Safety Areas

We've noticed that runway safety areas are not always being mowed according to FAA requirements. High performance aircraft demand that safety areas are regularly maintained and carefully checked. The best practice for maintenance of the safety area includes mowing the entire area defined on the approved airport layout plan.

FAA believes that under normal dry conditions, a safety area should support an aircraft without causing structural

damage to the aircraft or injury to the occupants. We believe that a general misunderstanding of runway safety areas may have prompted the maintenance issues. As aviation developed in this country, the alignment of takeoff and landing paths centered on a well-defined area known as the landing strip. The term "landing strip" described the graded area around and on which the runway or improved surface was built. With the development of higher performance aircraft, the primary

role of the landing strip changed to the runway safety area and the standards for its development and preservation.

During your routine airport inspections of you airfield, please make sure your runway safety area is free of objects and mowed and fully maintained. FAA standards are in Advisory Circular 150/530013.



*"...make sure your runway safety area is free of objects and mowed and fully maintained."*

## FAA RECOGNIZES OKLAHOMA AERONAUTICS COMMISSION

Kelvin Solco, Airports Division Manager, and Ed Agnew, Manager of the Arkansas/Oklahoma Airports Development Office, presented an External FAA Award to the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission (OAC). "In July 2004, OAC accepted a challenge from the FAA field office to become a more active player in the airport capital development process," said Agnew. "FAA's

workload had increased dramatically over the previous four years because of the non-primary entitlement program."

OAC, through the state channeling act legislation, manages 149 public airports. State Aviation Director, Victor Bird, leads a professional staff of 10.

"OAC redirected professional resources into capital development and

project formulation," Solco said. "By working together, we cut out duplication so both agencies are using our resources more effectively."

Thanks OAC for your leadership, initiative, responsiveness and professionalism!



*Thanks OAC for your leadership, initiative, responsiveness and professionalism!*



*Guillermo Villalobos , Program Manager Texas ADO & Chairperson of FAA SW Region International Aviation Committee*

### Villalobos Chairs International Committee

Guillermo Villalobos was recently appointed Chairperson of the FAA Southwest Region International Aviation Committee. Villalobos served as Co-Chair for the past 3 years and will continue working as a Program Manager in the Texas ADO while performing the additional duties.

“Coordinating FAA’s travel to Mexico and making sure that we follow

all the proper Embassy procedures are some of the duties,” Villalobos said. When asked about his biggest challenge, he responded, “I would like to provide more technical advice and influence. ”

Villalobos, who is bilingual, has traveled to Mexico four times and to Spain twice representing FAA. He is an engineer and also an ordained minister.



### ED AGNEW AND LANCE KEY RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY

Two Southwest Region Airports Division employees were recognized at the national Airports Awards ceremony on July 22, 2005, for their significant accomplishments and dedicated service to the organization. **Ed Agnew**, Manager of the Arkansas/Oklahoma Airports Development Office, and **Lance Key**, Airport Environmental Specialist, received awards in the Progress Pioneer Category.

Woodie Woodward, Assistant Administrator for Airports presented Agnew a Runner-Up Award in Wash-

ington D.C. Key received Honorable Mention.

The Progress Pioneer Award honors employees for launching pioneering activities and for taking calculate risks to leverage limited resources to carry out the task. Individuals are not afraid to break with tradition or convention to use available technologies to improve a process or procedure.

Congratulations Ed and Lance!

*Agnew Receives Runner Up Award for Progress Pioneer (From left: Woodie Woodward, Kelvin Solco, Ed Agnew and Kate Lang)*





## Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations Increase

Just when we thought we were getting a grip on our old nemesis, the runway incursion, it's back with a vengeance. In the first 10 months of fiscal year 2005, we've had 22 vehicle or pedestrian deviations. Six have been classified as runway incursions. During this period in 2004, we had 16 incidents and only 3 were considered runway incursions.

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 or hazard or results in a loss of required separation with an aircraft taking off, intending to take*

*off, landing or intending to land."*

Human error is the leading cause of runway incursions. The following were some of the causes of the deviations.  
\*Employees, tenants and contractors disregard or fail to follow the airports established rules

- Not driving on established routes
- No escort
- Driver knew the rules, but wasn't paying attention
- Unauthorized vehicles allowed on airport
- Pedestrians had a misconception about where they could go, stating

"Hey, I'm a PILOT"

- Hangar tenants gave bad on-airport directions

\*Failure to keep gates closed, allowing entry to airfield

\*Drivers improperly or not trained

\*Off-airport law enforcement responding to airport emergency

We urge airports to continue emphasizing Runway Safety Awareness when you meet with employees, tenants, and contractors. As the old saying goes, "The life you save may be your own."



*"...Hey, I'm a PILOT"*  
One of the excuses given for a pedestrian deviation

## Changes in Documenting Categorical Exclusions- Who Ya Gonna Call?

Sponsors must have environmental documentation before FAA can approve Airport Layout Plan revisions for proposed airport development. FAA needs this information to document all categorical exclusions. In the past, we recommended that sponsors get a written opinion from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on possible biological impacts of the development.

USFWS recently informed us that due to budget cuts and personnel constraints, they can no longer provide this service. This does not relieve airport sponsors of their obligation to provide an appropriate biological evaluation. So...what can we do?

We recommend that sponsors ask their state wildlife agency for their opinion using a letter similar to those formerly sent to

USFWS. Information on threatened and endangered species is available on the USFWS website at [www.fws.gov/endangered.species](http://www.fws.gov/endangered.species).

USFW will continue to consult and coordinate under the biological resources various laws if an impact is determined.

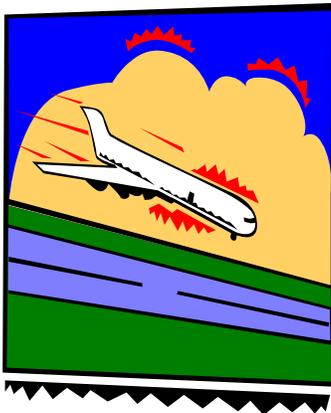
For more information, contact your ADO environmental specialist.



*Contact your State Wildlife Agency instead of USFWS for a Determination of Possible Impacts from Airport Development*

## Standard RSA's Make Happy Endings

*"If a standard runway safety area (RSA) were in place in Toronto...the aircraft would have stopped intact; the passengers would have departed; and the aircraft would have been towed back to the apron for future service"*



*"EMAS is designed to bring aircraft to a safe, predictable and reliable stop."*

On August 2, 2005, 309 passengers and crew escaped with only minor injuries when an Air France flight skidded off the runway at Toronto's Pearson Airport and burst into flames. Toronto was experiencing severe weather with high winds, heavy rain and lightning when the Airbus A340-300, arriving from Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport, landed.

Ken Jacobs from FAA Headquarter's Airport Engineering Division had some insightful comments on the accident. "If a standard runway safety area (RSA) were in place in Toronto, in all likelihood the accident would not have even made the news. The aircraft would have stopped intact; the passengers would have departed; and the aircraft would have been towed back to the apron for future service," said Ja-

cobs.

FAA and the Office of the Associate Administrator for Airports have been working hard for several years to prevent the type of accident that happened in Toronto. The aircraft came to rest about 600 feet from the end of the runway. FAA efforts to improve runway safety areas are geared at providing a graded area that extends as much as 1000 feet beyond the end of the runway. The RSA reduces or eliminates the risk of damage to aircraft in the event of an overrun such as what happened in Toronto.

"Although we all feel fortunate that there was a safe outcome for the passengers this time, we must remember that safety is no accident. The FAA is committed to and fully supports improving the RSA for every commercial service runway

in the US to meet current standards. We also recognize that airports are often constrained by nearby natural objects and infrastructure development. That is why FAA, in cooperation with industry, developed the Engineered Materials Arresting System (EMAS). EMAS is a cellular cement material that crushes under the weight of an aircraft and is designed to bring aircraft to a safe, predictable and reliable stop. Seventeen EMAS beds have been installed nationwide since 2000 and many more are planned. I only hope that we continue to get support from our airport-operator partners to complete all practical improvements to meet our safety goals. Of all the things that we can do to improve safety, keeping our fingers crossed is not one of them," said Jacobs.

## Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF)

On July 8, 2004, the FAA issued Advisory Circular (AC)150/5210-6D on *AIRCRAFT FIRE EXTINGUISHING AGENTS*. This AC replaced our 1985 edition.

The FAA performance standard for AFFF is now the same as that used by the military. (See MIL-F-24385F, *Fire Extinguishing Agent, Aqueous Film Forming Foam*

(*AFFF Liquid Concentrate, for Fresh and Seawater*, January 7, 1992.)

On future purchases, we encourage airport fire departments to buy AFFF that meets the military specifications, as they will always be compatible with other agents when mixed, no matter the manufacturer. We found that AFFF made by different manufacturers in

accordance with the UL 162 standard, was not always compatible. There was a tendency to gel and clog the ARFF truck's plumbing system.

We are not suggesting that airports discard their current inventory of UL 162 AFFF, as it is effective foam.



*AFFF Agents Conforming to the military standard are always compatible, no matter the manufacturer*

## Congressional Update of Capital Development Needs

Please send your updated airport capital development needs to your program manager by October so we can include the information in the next report to Congress. Every two years, FAA briefs Congress on needed aviation development. Congress uses the information to set AIP funding levels and maximum PFC collection rates.

“Capital development needs are not the same as Capital Implementation

Plans or CIP's,” said Cameron Bryan, Manager of the Planning and Programming Branch. “This report keeps Congress informed about all AIP eligible, feasible and warranted development needed at NPIAS airports.” Needs information is based on regulatory (safety/security) requirements, design standards, capacity/congestion, noise mitigation, planning needs and infrastructure maintenance.”

“This is an excellent opportunity for sponsors

to update the costs and near-term and mid-term needs for their airports,” Bryan said. Current cost estimates, not including inflation, should be used.

“Planning-level cost estimates are appropriate,” said Bryan. “More precise estimates are only needed for projects with proposed AIP funding.”

Contact your ADO or Program Manager for more details.

*“Congress uses the information to set AIP funding levels and maximum PFC collection rates.”*

## New Noise Grant Condition

FAA added a new condition to fiscal year 2005 AIP noise grants requiring sponsors file an annual report. “This will help FAA track Noise Compatibility Program (NCP) implementa-

tion,” said Cameron Bryan, Manager of the Planning and Programming Branch. “We are asking sponsors about AIP grant funds, parcels mitigated by DNL, total number of people mitigated, the means

used, and future noise mitigation plans based on the airport's priorities.” Bryan said that this fall his branch would send a format and instructions to the sponsors required to submit the report.



Cameron Bryan, Manager, Planning and Programming Branch, discusses Noise Issues



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## Updated Grant Assurances

When an organization accepts federal FAA funds, they obligate themselves to keeping their airport within certain standards. The specific obligations are either in the application for Federal aid and become part of the final grant offer or are in restrictive covenants to property deeds. The duration of these obligations depends on the type of recipient, the useful life of the facility being developed, and other conditions stipulated in the assurances.

AIP grants issued after March 29, 2005, contain new grant assurances. Program Guidance Letter PGL 05-03 summarizes the major changes and describes the rationale for change.

If you have any questions, contact your ADO or program manager.

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