

Office of Airports Obstacle Briefing

MEETING 23-02

Dave Perry, FAA/AAS-120, provided a briefing on FAA Office of Airports' responsibilities for on-airport obstructions. He explained there is a step-by-step process in the Airport Data and Information Portal (ADIP) to collect information about obstructions. One of the modules in ADIP is Airports' Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) module, which is based on Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5300-16, -17, and -18. AC 16 covers the geodetic control, which means that every airport uses the same basic control network. AC 17 regulates the imagery requirements. AC 18 details how the surveys should be completed, including data tables that cover every obstruction.

In ADIP, the proponent first submits a detailed statement of work and then they submit an imagery plan. Required imagery is collected from within 3 to 3.5 miles around the airport. AC 18 covers every feature that is to be collected. For each project, the statement of work for each step must be approved before the survey data can be loaded to the system. One feature of the survey is obstructions. The survey splits the runway into sectors and surveyors collect information about the two highest man-made objects and the two highest non-man-made objects and any objects that penetrate the departure surfaces, etc., along with any representative objects. Once the process is complete, and the survey data is loaded to the system, the Office of Airports performs blunder checks (checking measurements like distance from objects to the end of the runway, etc.) to check the surveyor's work. Once the survey passes all checks, it is submitted to National Geodetic Survey (NGS), and at that point, the Office of Airports is out of the process. After NGS validates the data, they create a file package that is entered into the system, which includes the Obstacle Authoritative Source Database.

Once the data is in the system, the Runway Airspace Management (RAM) tool takes the obstacles from the Obstacle Authoritative Source Database and reports their status (terminated, removed, lit, etc.). For example, if a bunch of trees were removed, this information would be reported through the RAM tool. Another example would be if a pole was too tall, a mitigation might be to light the pole. Then the airport could report that it was lit via the RAM tool and the NOTAM would go away. Future updates to the RAM tool include adding the airport design surfaces (creation and evaluation). From that information, an obstacle action plan could be created that identifies every obstacle that penetrates any of those surfaces. The airport is responsible to report back to the region through the RAM tool about how they will mitigate each obstacle or, if they cannot, to state the reasons why. The plan would be approved on a yearly basis.