



Federal Aviation Administration

National Part 139 CertAlert

****Advisory**Cautionary**Non-Directive**Advisory**Cautionary**Non-Directive**Advisory**Cautionary**Non-Directive****

Date: 4/1/2016 **No. 16-01**

To: Title 14 CFR Part 139 Airport Operators

Subject: Operational Safety During Snow Removal Activities

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1. **Purpose.** This CertAlert provides guidance to airport operators on the proper procedures to follow when conducting airport maintenance activities such as snow removal.
2. **Background.** An accident occurred in December 2015 in which an aircraft landed and collided with a piece of snow removal equipment on a runway. This was primarily due to the flight crew not having updated runway status information. Similarly, multiple instances of aircraft missed approaches have occurred at various airports because of attempts to land on a runway while snow removal operations were taking place. These recent events have highlighted the importance of operational safety, effective communications, and coordination when conducting airport maintenance activities on aircraft operating areas.
3. **Recommendations.**
 - a. Close a surface (runway, taxiway, ramp, etc.) via a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) when conducting maintenance activities such as snow removal operations. *Simply occupying a runway does not constitute a closure.*
 - b. Preemptively close runways and taxiways that are not being actively maintained.
 - c. When a surface is not operationally functional, the airport **must** issue a NOTAM advising of the maintenance activity, in accordance with 139.339(c)(1).
 - (1) This NOTAM must be in place **before** personnel and equipment operate on the active areas and should be cancelled when work is complete to accurately represent the current environment.
 - (2) Use the “work in progress” (WIP) keyword for NOTAMs issued for these types of activities.

- d.** Verbally coordinate the issuance of NOTAMs and runway activities with the Air Traffic facility responsible for providing clearances to aircraft at your airport. This applies to both towered and non-towered airports and may include an Enroute facility, terminal radar approach control facility (TRACON), or airport traffic control tower (ATCT).

 - (1) At towered facilities, clearly communicate your intentions to the Air Traffic facility responsible for providing clearances to aircraft at your airport.
 - (2) At a non-towered airport or airport where the tower is closed, continually announce your location and intentions via the Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF) and monitor the frequency for area traffic. Periodically verify that you are communicating on the correct frequency.
- e.** Whenever possible, issue a NOTAM well in advance of the planned activities. This will allow for the issued NOTAM to be properly disseminated to users (pilots, air traffic, airport tenants, etc).
- f.** Be aware of your surroundings and continually scan for aircraft, regardless of clearance. Be especially vigilant while operating on an airfield with no ATCT service. Note that aircraft don't always communicate their intentions via frequency.
- g.** Contact your assigned Airport Certification / Safety Inspector with any questions.



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