



Vanquishing the V/PD

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Safety Section

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This publication is directed primarily towards airport management to be disseminated to all levels of personnel working at your airfield. Vanquishing the V/PD can be accomplished through a solid partnership between the FAA and airport management. The responsibility of making sure that the proper safeguards are in place; however, lies squarely on the shoulders of airport management. Please use this information and all that follows as a guide by which to provide a safer environment at your airfield.

Recent attention has been focused on perimeter fencing installations at airports since April 2014 when a teenager jumped the fence at the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport (SJC), climbed into the wheel well of a Boeing 767, and stowed away to Maui, Hawaii.

Of the 45 VPDs recorded in the Western-Pacific Region in the first six months of calendar year of 2015, 8 (18%) were caused by pedestrians jumping airport perimeter fences. 6 (75%) of those fence jumpers ended up crossing active runways. Half of the fence jumping incidents occurred at certificated airports.

Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 139.335(b) states that “Fencing that meets the requirements of applicable FAA and Transportation Security Administration security regulations in areas subject to these regulations is acceptable for meeting the requirements of paragraph (a)(1) of this section (safeguards to prevent inadvertent entry to the movement area by unauthorized persons or vehicles).”

FAA Advisor Circular 150/5360-13, Planning and Design Guidelines for Airport Terminal Facilities states: “Security fencing can vary in design, height, and type, depending on local security needs. Generally, it is recommended that the fencing be, as a minimum, No. 10 gauge, galvanized steel, chain link fabric installed to a height of 8 feet

and topped with a three strand (12 gauge) barbed wire overhang. The latter should have a minimum 6-inch separation between the strands and extend outward at a 45 degree angle from the horizontal.”

A Transportation Security Administration (TSA) publication entitled Recommended Security Guidelines for Airport Planning, Design and Construction, May 2011 states: “Chain link fences are often constructed with seven (7) feet of fabric plus one or more coils of stranded barbed wire on top, which may be angled outward at a 45 degree incline from the airside.” This document does not create regulatory requirements or mandates of any kind and, surprisingly, it is the least restrictive of all of the guidance.

FAA CertAlert 04-16, Deer Hazard to Aircraft and Deer Fencing states: “The FAA recommends a 10-12 foot chain link fence with 3–strand barbed wire outriggers. In some cases and airport may be able to use and 8-foot chain link fence with 3-strand barbed outriggers, depending upon the amount of deer activity in a local area.”

So how high should the perimeter fence be at your airport?

The answer is: It depends.

Generally speaking, if your airport is certificated under Part 139 or Federal funds are used to purchase and install the fence, the recommendations in AC 150/5360-13 must be followed. Following these guidelines would also satisfy the recommendations made by the TSA. If, however, your airport is experiencing issues with deer, then the recommendations in CertAlert 04-16 should be followed. That would satisfy TSA recommendations as well.

Be careful to consult your FAA Airport Certification Manual (ACM) and your TSA Airport Security Plan (ASP) as the stated height of your perimeter fence in those documents will be the minimum value required at your airport even though it might be higher (more restrictive) than FAA or TSA recommendations.

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