



## **Vanquishing the V/PD**

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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.

Newly revised Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5210-20A, Ground Vehicle Operations to include Taxiing or Towing an Aircraft on Airports, incorporates major changes. Chief among these changes are: a definition of Vehicle or Pedestrian Deviation (V/PD), expanded guidance concerning aircraft being taxied and/or towed by non-pilots and an allowance for maintenance vehicles to be present and/or maintenance to be performed in the runway safety areas (RSA) during air carrier/aircraft operations.

The official definition of a Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviation is now: “Any entry or movement on the airport movement area or safety area by a vehicle operator or pedestrian that has not been authorized by air traffic control.” This definition includes surface incidents involving aircraft operated by non-pilots, such as anyone.

Certificated airports must now ensure that all mechanics who tow and/or taxi aircraft in the movement areas receive movement area training. Newly revised 14 CFR Part 329(e) requires initial and recurrent training for all persons who access the movement and safety areas. 14 CFR Part 139.329(e) states: “Ensure that all persons are trained on procedures required under paragraph (b) of this section prior to the initial performance of such duties

and at least once every 12 consecutive calendar months, including consequences of noncompliance, prior to moving on foot, or operating a ground vehicle, in movement areas or safety areas.” An aircraft under tow and an aircraft being repositioned under their own power for maintenance purposes are considered and treated as “vehicles”. Furthermore, the definition of an aircraft in the Pilot Controller Glossary states in part: “An Aircraft is a device(s) that are used or intended to be used for flight in the air.” Therefore, given that a mechanic taxiing or towing an aircraft is not intended for flight, airport operators should include mechanics in their procedures, policies and training regarding vehicle access on the airside of the airport. The only exception to this is if the mechanic taxiing the aircraft is a rated pilot.

Airport operators should consider requiring any person expected to operate vehicles on the airside and anyone authorized to taxi or tow an aircraft, to be able to communicate in and understand the English language. Airport operators can require vehicle operators to maintain a current driver’s license and may establish a means of identification that would permit the operation of a vehicle on the movement and safety areas of the airport. Airport operators should establish procedures to reduce distracted driving practices; e.g., talking or texting on mobile devices while the vehicle is in motion.

Under special circumstances, maintenance activities and maintenance vehicles will be allowed in the runway safety areas during air carrier/aircraft operations. Examples may include NAVAID maintenance, mowing or other safety-related circumstances. A Letter of Agreement (LOA) will be required at each towered airport to clarify the specific activities. Signatories to the LOA will include the airport operator, the local Air Traffic Control Tower, FAA Technical Operations, and any other airport tenant that may be permitted into the RSA during air carrier/aircraft operations. The LOA will become part of the airport’s Airport Certification Manual if the airport is certificated.

The overall responsibility for the operation of vehicles on an airport rests with the airport operator. And for mechanics taxiing or towing aircraft, there is a shared responsibility between the airport operator and aircraft operator.

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Advisory Circular 150/5210-20A is available on FAA website:

[http://www.faa.gov/airports/resources/advisory\\_circulars/](http://www.faa.gov/airports/resources/advisory_circulars/)

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