

The Different Types of AWOS Maintenance

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Non-Federal AWOS must be maintained to at least the minimum standards specified in the latest version of the “Non-Federal AWOS AC,” 150/5220-16.¹ But owners may choose to maintain their systems to an even more rigorous standard.

The AC describes three types of routine maintenance activities:

- (1) **Tri-annual maintenance** (performed every four months, +/- 15 days) does not require specialized training related to AWOS. The maintenance tasks are limited to cleaning, visual inspection, etc.² Examples include visual checks of the AWOS, cleaning sensor lenses, and re-setting the system’s clock. This type of maintenance does not include testing or calibrating AWOS parameters and radio transmitters.³ Consequently, personnel who perform tri-annual maintenance do not need to have FAA-issued verification authority, nor a General Radiotelephone Operator License (GROL).
- (2) **Annual performance maintenance** (performed once every 12 months, +/- 60 days) verifies that the AWOS is still in an FAA-approved configuration and operating within commissioned tolerances.⁴ This type of maintenance requires testing and calibrating AWOS parameters such as wind speed, temperature, dew point, humidity, and barometric pressure.⁵ Consequently, personnel who perform annual maintenance must have FAA-issued verification authority.⁶ They must also have a GROL.
- (3) **Triennial maintenance** (performed once every three years, +/- 90 days) tests the accuracy of AWOS wind-direction instruments. Personnel who perform triennial maintenance must have FAA-issued verification authority.⁷

“**Non-Routine Maintenance**” is also described in the AC. It may involve tasks such as capturing changes to sensors or system parameters, repairing damage, etc. But it may merely involve tasks that are limited to visual inspections, cleaning, etc.⁸ The earlier descriptions of “routine maintenance” should allow owners to determine if FAA-issued verification authority is required for non-routine maintenance. When in doubt, owners should contact Non-Federal Program@faa.gov.

¹ Non-Federal AWOS AC,” 150/5220-16, section (§) 1.4.a; 4.1

² § 4.4.a

³ § 4.4.a

⁴ § 2.4.a; 2.4.g

⁵ § 4.4.b

⁶ § 1.4.d; 2.9.a

⁷ §4.4.c

⁸ §2.4.(c)(2)(c)(ii)