

Glenda Wiles

From: Sarah.Price@faa.gov
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2017 1:44 PM
Cc: Steve.Engebrecht@faa.gov
Subject: GA Letter - Winter Surface Condition Assessment and Reporting
Attachments: SteveLetter.pdf

As you are well aware, winter upon us with a vengeance. Our office has been receiving occasional questions and concerns regarding snow removal on airports, particularly for general aviation airports. The attached letter includes links to two new Advisory Circulars (AC) related to this issue, as well as a link to a 30 minute video which provides a nice summary of the ACs.

These ACs apply to all airports that receive AIP funds by Grant Assurance 19.

19. Operation and Maintenance.

a. The airport and all facilities which are necessary to serve the aeronautical users of the airport, other than facilities owned or controlled by the United States, shall be operated at all times in a safe and serviceable condition and in accordance with the minimum standards as may be required or prescribed by applicable Federal, state and local agencies for maintenance and operation. It will not cause or permit any activity or action thereon which would interfere with its use for airport purposes. It will suitably operate and maintain the airport and all facilities thereon or connected therewith, with due regard to climatic and flood conditions. Any proposal to temporarily close the airport for non-aeronautical purposes must first be approved by the Secretary. In furtherance of this assurance, the sponsor will have in effect arrangements for-

- 1) Operating the airport's aeronautical facilities whenever required;
- 2) Promptly marking and lighting hazards resulting from airport conditions, including temporary conditions; and
- 3) Promptly notifying airmen of any condition affecting aeronautical use of the airport. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to require that the airport be operated for aeronautical use during temporary periods when snow, flood or other climatic conditions interfere with such operation and maintenance. Further, nothing herein shall be construed as requiring the maintenance, repair, restoration, or replacement of any structure or facility which is substantially damaged or destroyed due to an act of God or other condition or circumstance beyond the control of the sponsor.

The primary message we want to convey is the importance of providing pilots, and local air traffic control if applicable, with information regarding conditions at your airport via a NOTAM, and having a plan to clear the operating surfaces on your airport as soon as possible following inclement weather.

While this letter is geared toward general aviation airports, we are sending this to our entire email list as an FYI or reminder of your responsibilities with respect to operating your airport in a safe and serviceable manner.

If you have any questions, please contact me or your Project Manager here in the Helena ADO. Thank you for your continued efforts related to aviation safety.

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January 24, 2017

Dear Airport Sponsor:

Obligated airports (those who have received an AIP grant) are required to maintain available airport surfaces in a safe operating condition at all times and to provide prompt notification when areas normally available are less than satisfactorily cleared of contaminants for safe operations. Airport operators are responsible for reporting contaminants on all surfaces when they exist.

On July 29, 2016, FAA published Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5200-30D, Airport Field Condition Assessments and Winter Operations Safety. This AC changed reporting requirements by implementing FAA's Takeoff and Landing Performance Assessment (TALPA) criteria. TALPA aims to reduce the risk of runway overruns by providing airport operators with a method to objectively assess the runway condition, using runway condition codes when a paved runway is not dry. Reporting of contaminants must now follow the procedures set forth in AC 150/5200-30D and 150/5200-28F, Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) for Airport Operators, published 12/30/2016.

FAA has developed a 30 minute video which summarizes how airport operators are to report winter surface contaminants, per AC 150/5200-30D and 150/5200-28F. This video can be found at:

<https://www.faa.gov/tv/?mediaId=1412>. Additional information can also be found on FAA's website at:

<http://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/talpa/>.

The NOTAM system called NOTAM Manager is the preferred and most efficient means of generating a runway condition code (RwyCC). A secondary system that will produce a RwyCC is ENOTAM II (ENII), but it lacks some of the functionality that NOTAM Manager provides. Airports without access to either NOTAM Manager or ENII must call Flight Service to provide their field conditions. Flight Service will originate a NOTAM on their behalf using the new format.

Thank you for doing your part to promote aviation safety. If you have any questions, please contact us at (406) 449-5271.

Sincerely,

Steve Engebrecht, P.E.
Helena Airports District Office