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FAA Amends Airport Training Requirements

In June, 2006 the FAA issued Advisory Circular 150/5200-36 which announced new training guidelines for Airport personnel engaged in wildlife work on Part 139 airports.

Essentially the new guidance comes in three parts:

1. Qualifications and training for biologists who write wildlife plans for airports. Plan writers must demonstrate not only competence in wildlife biology but also the ability to work safely on airports.
2. Airport personnel who implement wildlife control plans on airports must have approved training. Airport personnel must have initial training in wildlife control from an approved source.
3. Airport personnel who are initially qualified to implement wildlife mitigation plans must also have annual training of at least 8 hours in wildlife control.

Nothing in this Advisory Circular precludes airports from using the ‘train the trainer’ concept, however the ‘trainer’ must attend an approved training course.

Further information and the complete AC can be found on the FAA’s website under advisory circulars, 150/5200-36.

Airport cuts costs, reduces strikes

Thanks to a new program and suggestions, Eglin Air Force Base has seen the number of wildlife strikes drop by almost 75 percent over the past year. The significance is tied to Bird Strike Committee USA statistics that indicate bird and other wildlife strikes to aircraft causes more than \$600 million in damage annually. In addition more than 195 people have lost their lives to these strikes since 1988.

(cont’d page 2)

(Cut strikes, save money fm P.1)

A little more than a year ago Marty Daniel and Charles Kara, two U.S. Department of Agriculture wildlife biologists, joined the flight safety office and started a comprehensive wildlife assessment.

"The way we try to be proactive is we attack the source of the problem," Mr. Daniel said. "Instead of just going out and scaring the birds off the runway, we try to figure out why they're here in the first place."

Some of the changes they are implementing are easy to put in place and are turning out to be very effective. One change was to simply keep the grass located around the flight line mown to around 10-to-12 inches in height versus 4 to 6 inches. "Grass management is one easy management tool we came up with because we can manipulate the grass by either not mowing it, or mowing it to a certain height," Mr. Daniel said. "Flocking birds like to be able to see each other when they land," Mr. Kara said. "So if they go in there and can't see each other, they won't stay around."

The team has also focused their efforts on filling in bare spots on the ground around the flight line as well as eliminating weeds and planting new grasses that do not attract birds. "Bare spots attract birds too," Mr. Daniel said. "With a bare spot right next to a food source, that's an attraction for them, so we're working to eliminate those bare ground situations." "We're also going to working to carefully apply some herbicides in certain areas to reduce the amount of weeds," Mr. Kara said. "(Weeds) are what really attract insects, and the insects attract birds."

During their assessment they also noticed a few small ponds around the flight line. This was due to an active beaver population creating dams. "I know you don't really think about beavers and BASH, but they were impounding some water around the flight line and water attracts birds," Mr. Daniel said. "So in order to get rid of the water, we have to get rid of the beavers."

The flight safety office also frequently calls upon other offices around Eglin to help push the BASH program over the top. They've utilized the expertise of personnel from airfield management, civil engineering as well as environmentalists at Jackson Guard. "(Our) goal is to provide technical and field support to the BASH program for the continued successful management of bird and wildlife species that threaten military and civilian aircraft," said Dennis Teague, an endangered species biologist with the 96th Civil Engineer Group at Jackson Guard.

Air Force Material Command

Eglin is home not only to active duty air forces but also to Okaloosa Regional Airport, providing commercial service to northwest Florida. FAA recommends grass heights of 6-12"; USAF recommends grass heights of 7-14". As grass grows longer it becomes senescent and grows slower. Longer, slower growing grass requires less mowing, reducing labor, fuel and equipment costs for the airport operator—Editor

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the “Airport Wildlife Mitigation Newsletter”, sponsored by Embry Riddle Aeronautical University and Avion Corporation. Our goal is to bring those in the airport wildlife mitigation community ‘news you can use’, such as the articles on FAA rule changes for training or the positive results of proper airfield grass heights.

We welcome news articles and information of interest to the community, questions and comments. Please address your emails to the editor at: eschenfelder@compuserve.com.

We hope to be with you every quarter with news of the impact of expanding wildlife populations on our expanding aviation community, complete with mitigation ideas and news.

Paul Eschenfelder— Editor
Avion Corporation

USAF Loses T-38 to Canada Geese

WMC-TV Memphis reports: January 18, 2007

A military aircraft participating in a training exercise crashed Thursday afternoon in Northern Mississippi. Officials with Columbus Air Force Base said the accident happened at 1:30pm Thursday afternoon approximately 10 miles west of Batesville on Curtis Road, near Highway 6. The crash occurred in an extremely remote area of Panola County, a place where military jets frequently fly training missions.

Military and medical personnel rushed to the crash scene of a T-38 jet in a remote area of Panola County.

"[It was a] loud roar, real close to the house," said 12-year-old Dakota Pierce, who heard the jet flying during a low level training exercise. "It startled me pretty bad."

Investigators say the pilot and trainee ejected moments before the T-38 went down. "I asked one of the pilots what happened. He said a flock of geese flew up and they went down," said land owner Kevin Locke. "This time of year geese are really bad in this part of the neighborhood," added Philip Alford, who also lives in the area.

By nightfall, the scene on the ground remained crowded with activity. Military personnel will be stationed on-site through the night so they can continue their investigation first thing in the morning.

"A safety investigation is underway," explained one Columbus Air Force Base official. Medics checked out the pilot and trainee. They were given the green light to return back to Columbus Air Force Base tonight.

Plane crashes into lorry in France

25/01/2007 23:56

PARIS (Reuters) - A passenger plane carrying 54 people crashed into a small lorry in the south of France on Thursday, killing the driver, the transport ministry said.

The incident happened at the Pau-Pyrenees airport after a bird flew into the Regional Airlines plane's engine as it was taking off, forcing it to make an emergency landing.

The 50 passengers and four cabin staff on the Fokker 100 were not injured and were evacuated from the plane, which was flying for Air France between Pau and Paris' Roissy airport.

"The aircraft, which was taking off, had to carry out an emergency landing next to the runway after a bird flew into one of the engines," a statement from the ministry said.

The plane then hit the public works lorry traveling on a road around the airport and the driver died in the accident, it said. In a separate statement, Regional Airlines said a second person was in the vehicle and was injured. The plane came to a stop several hundred metres later.

"...after a bird flew into the Regional Airlines plane's engine as it was taking off..."



www.birdstrikecanada.com

BSC-Canada has issued a call for papers for the 2007 Bird Strike Conference to be held September 10-13 in Kingston, Ontario.

Proposals for papers/posters must be submitted to Bruce Mackinnon (mackinb@tc.gc.ca) by March 16, 2007. Notice of acceptance will be sent by April 30, 2007.

For more information and the conference brochure see the website at: www.birdstrikecanada.com.

YVR LANDS WORLD'S FIRST RUNWAY DEBRIS RADAR DETECTION SYSTEM

Written by Vancouver International Airport
15:21z - 2006/12/13

Vancouver International Airport (YVR) is the first commercial airport in the world to install and operate the Tarsier Foreign Object Debris (FOD) radar detection system, developed by U.K.-based QinetiQ (pronounced "kinetic") to provide 24-hour automated runway debris detection in all weather conditions.

"We are proud to be the first airport in the world to utilize a high-tech solution for runway debris detection," said Brett Patterson, Director, Operations Safety and Planning, Vancouver International Airport Authority. "QinetiQ's innovative Tarsier system provides around-the-clock runway monitoring. This is an unprecedented step forward in keeping our runways clear of FOD at all times, and speaks of our commitment to safety." FOD as small and seemingly innocuous as a broken wheel from a suitcase, a bolt or a discarded plastic bag can cause potentially serious damage to an aircraft. Each year, loose objects such as these on airport runways, taxiways and aprons cost the global aviation industry an estimated \$4-billion US. Tarsier has been proven to detect and locate small objects to within three metres anywhere on the runway.

The industry standard for FOD prevention is manual runway checks between aircraft take-offs and landings, which is difficult in bad weather and at night. Tarsier is the first commercially available technological solution to the problem of FOD on runways, and enhances current measures used at YVR, including staff education, an annual FOD Walk to collect debris, strategically placed FOD garbage barrels at locations where loose objects are most likely to be discovered, and regular sweeping of the runways and taxiways for anything that might harm an aircraft.

Four Tarsier radar units are installed at YVR to provide continuous coverage of the north and south parallel runways, each of which is approximately three kilometres in length. A display unit, providing the Airport Authority's Operations team with an all-weather, around-the-clock runway picture, is installed in YVR's Operations Centre. The display unit provides Airport Operations staff with coordinates of reported FOD. Coordinates are entered into a vehicle GPS navigation system, allowing Airport Operations staff to go directly to the location and retrieve the object in a matter of minutes.

Patterson also said that the most common type of FOD found on YVR's runways was bird remains— Editor

Bad time for the Maple Leaf

During November Canada had more than its fair share of aircraft/wildlife conflicts.

At Vancouver on November 21st an Air Canada Jazz DHC-8 turboprop plowed through a flock of snow geese at low altitude on approach just before dawn. Passengers could hear the birds bouncing off the airplane during the multiple strikes. One engine suffered an ingestion of probably more than one bird. Keeping in mind that the composite material in turboprop blades is not designed to withstand birdstrikes, the flight was very lucky.

The same morning an Alaska Airlines B-737 on departure at Vancouver suffered multiple strikes. The attached photo shows at least 19 impact points on the aircraft nose alone. The B737 also suffered engine ingestion with bent blades and scoring of the engine casing.



The culprits were probably a large flock of dunlins, a shorebird. The increasing wildlife populations in the Fraser River valley have put more pressure on flocks to forage closer to the airport.

Meanwhile, on the far side of Canada at Moncton, just days prior to the above, an Air Canada Jazz regional jet aborted its takeoff after being struck virtually everywhere by gulls.



Cont'd next page

The gulls were impaled on the captain's pitot tube (which generates the pilot's airspeed indication), wedged into the landing gear, damaged the captain's windshield and were ingested into *both engines*.

The unseasonably warm and wet weather had created an abundance of 'worms' which had covered the runway. Naturally the gulls were present feeding when the strike occurred.

Transport Canada recommends that airports with earthworm problems be prepared to sweep the runways after heavy rains. Further, those airports with known earthworm problems should treat the first 30-40 meters of grass along the runway edges with chemicals known to kill/repel earthworms, such as Benomyl or Tersan. This simple modification of the environment will eliminate the gulls food source, sending them elsewhere to feed.

Source: CADORS



NEXT WILDLIFE HAZARD TRAINING SESSIONS

Embry-Riddle has scheduled its next Airport Wildlife Management seminars. The next two seminars will be held at Charlotte, N.C., May 15-18, and Seattle, August 8-10.

This seminar is acceptable to the FAA Administrator to fulfill the FAA's training requirements for airport personnel supervising wildlife control on airports, airport personnel's annual training requirement and the training requirement for biologists who wish to conduct airport wildlife assessments or write airport mitigation plans.

The seminars are three days in length. The first two days consist of intense classroom sessions led by four of the nation's top wildlife management experts. These laid-back sessions allow for plenty of interaction with the instructors, opportunities for questions and networking with fellow participants. Day three features a field trip to the host airport, during which hands-on wildlife mitigation exercises will be performed and mitigation techniques discussed.

Participants who successfully complete the seminar will receive a certificate of completion and continuing education units (CEU) from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

You may register online at Embry-Riddle's website or contact Billy Floreal at 866-574-9125 for more information.