

***Merrill Field,
a proud tradition
of serving Alaska***



***Providing over
80 years of
aviation service***

MERRILL FIELD BULLETIN

Current News About Your Airport

*Merrill Field Airport
800 Merrill Field Drive, Anchorage AK 99501*

December, 2013

www.muni.org/merrill1/merrill1.cfm

What's Happening at Merrill Field

As this year comes to an end, we would like to express our appreciation to all airport stakeholders for your patience during our summer construction season. Year-end status of our capital projects is as follows:

- ➔ *Runway Lighting Electrical Vault Improvements* – Swanson General was awarded this contract in September, 2013. This project encompasses the demolition of our 30+ year old electrical vault including the diesel standby generator, distribution/control equipment, constant current regulators and its appurtenances. A new electrical vault is being constructed to house the updated vault equipment including an Airfield Lighting Control Systems (ALCS) control panel. The new system will enhance the reliability of airfield lighting (runways, taxiways and aprons). Transitioning from the old system to the new has been coordinated with FAA ATCT and the FAA Facility System division. Planned completion is summer, 2014.
- ➔ *Security Improvements (Cameras/Lights/Signage/Fencing), Phase 2* – Our contractor, Alcan General is working on this project. A fiber optic line was installed this summer along Merrill Field Drive to support communication reliability to our camera system. This project also includes the installation of new hi-definition cameras along Merrill Field Drive and at the Airport Heights and 15th Ave. & Lake Otis entrances. Network configuration and integration are still underway. New light-emitting diode (LED) apron lights and fixtures were also installed on the south side of RWY 7/25.
- ➔ *Airport Master Plan Update, Phase 1* – We are working closely with HDR Alaska, Inc. to complete the first phase of the master plan. Anticipated completion is March, 2014. For the latest updates, go to www.merrillfieldmasterplan.com.

Last but not least, signs were installed on all vehicle and barrier gates this past summer. The signs give a reference point to pilots and non-pilots when communicating with ATCT Tower. This project enhances our Driver Training Program and will curtail unauthorized entry which could result in a vehicle/pedestrian deviation (VPD).

Your cooperation during these construction projects shows commitment in helping us provide a better, safer airport. We look forward to working with you again on capital projects next summer.

***As this year rapidly comes to a close, the Airport Manager's Office Staff
and Airport Maintenance Crew Wish You a Very Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year! Fly Safe in 2014!***

Merrill Field Users Group Meeting Scheduled

Airport management is looking forward to meeting with Merrill Field users to discuss airport issues and share ideas for airport improvements. The first Merrill Field Users Group meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8 at 4:00 p.m. in the Airport Manager's Office conference room, 800 Merrill Field Drive. Airport Manager, Paul Bowers, is eager to visit with you (pilots, business owners, customers, leaseholders) to discuss whatever you have on your mind regarding Merrill Field.

Please plan to attend this kick-off meeting; our goal is to meet once each quarter. If you have any questions, call the Airport Manager's Office at 343-6303.

Snow removal concerns

The Airport maintenance crew recently encountered several items in lease lot snow piles that could have caused significant damage to the airport's only runway snow blower which is 17 years old. Among the pieces of wood, ropes, plexi glass, and flashing was a 3 ft. section of railroad track. Each time these items go through the snow blower there is a chance that it will become inoperable. Without this piece of equipment, our ability to keep the operating surfaces cleared of snow would be greatly diminished.

Please pick up any loose items on your lots and near your tiedown area; only "clean" snow should be stockpiled in the designated areas. We appreciate your attention to this problem as we strive to keep the airport operational so you can provide service to your customers.

Merrill Field Master Plan Update

Work is progressing on the Merrill Field Airport Master Plan update, Merrill Field's 20-year plan for airport development. A draft of the first five chapters is anticipated to be available by the end of the year.

Based on the FAA-approved forecast, input from airport users and local residents, and study results, the planning team is looking at improvements grouped around four thematic areas: (1) safety, standards, and asset preservation; (2) meeting existing trends/moderate growth; (3) community focus, and (4) economic drivers. Each theme offers considerations for airfield improvements, ground access and parking, airport support facilities, and other ideas for improvements.

The thematic alternatives were presented to the master plan's Advisory Group on October 21, 2013, and to the public at an open house at UAA's Aviation Technology Building on October 22, 2013. Additionally, the team presented the draft result from the noise study. Comments received at the open house, on-line, and via e-mail are under consideration and will be addressed in the draft plan.

Early next year, work will begin on evaluating and refining alternatives, leading to selection of a preferred alternative. Ultimately, the plan will be approved by the Anchorage Assembly and the FAA.

Interested in learning more? All materials are available on the master planning web site. You can also sign up to receive progress updates at <http://www.merrillfieldmasterplan.com/Index.html>.

MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Municipal Airports Aviation Advisory Commission meetings are open to the public and held the first Thursday of every other month. Please call 343-6303 for additional information.

Meeting Dates:

Jan 9, Mar 6, May 1, July 10

<u>Commissioner</u>	<u>Term Exp.</u>
Dick Armstrong	10/14/15
Sharon Chamard	10/14/15
Jim Cieplak	10/14/16
Don DeVoe, V Chair	10/14/16
Greg Pearce	10/14/14
Terry Pena	10/14/15
Jim Powell, Chair	10/14/14

Statistics

Operations:

Dec, 2012 – Nov, 2013: 129,248
2013 Based Aircraft: 833

Winter season taxiway closures announced

In an effort to improve efficiency of our snow removal program, the following taxiways have been closed for the duration of this winter season: **Delta**, north of RWY 7/25; **Hotel**, north of RWY 7/25 and **Juliet**, north and south of RWY 7/25. To avoid any confusion, the lights and signs have been removed from these taxiways and the closures are included with current NOTAMs.

We appreciate your understanding and patience should these closures cause you any inconvenience as you transition to or from Runway 7/25.

Tower Talk: Winter is Here

Happy Holidays! The personnel at Merrill Tower wish all of you a joyous Holiday Season and look forward to serving you in 2014.

- Please give a little extra room when you turn to follow an aircraft into MRI. With several taxiways now closed on the north side of Runway 7/25 until the snow is gone, the possibility of a go-around for traffic still on the runway has increased.
- Runway exiting also takes a bit longer this time of year; after a snowfall, we temporarily have fewer taxiways available for exiting.
- Giving braking action reports is always appreciated so we can provide timely and up to date information to the next arrival or departure.
- Smile more.
- Communication is key. Continue to ask questions and speak up if unfamiliar.
- You must read back instructions with your call sign included.
- Fly friendly, help reduce neighborly noise.
- If you have a concern or compliment, please call.

Brian Ochs, Manager
Merrill Field ATCT
271-2698



Assistance needed to reduce Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations

2013 has not been a good year for vehicle/pedestrian deviations (VPD) at Merrill Field Airport. We have had seven (7) runway incursions so far this year; only two (2) were recorded in 2012. FAA is closely monitoring this activity and is taking this matter very seriously.

We need your assistance in making sure **gates remain closed when not in use** and ask you to watch for any individuals who seem out of place or appear to be lost. If it looks like someone is preparing to walk or drive into a controlled movement area or if they just don't belong at the airport, don't hesitate to stop them and ask where they are going. Sometimes they may need directions, and your early intervention can help prevent a potential VPD.

We do not expect you to put yourself in a confrontational situation, so please call the Airport Manager's Office, the Air Traffic controllers, or APD if you notice anyone suspicious that requires attention.

Airport Manager's Office: 343-6303 (M-F, 7:30 - 4:30)
Air Traffic Control Tower: 271-3121 (evenings & weekends)
Anchorage Police: 786-8900 (evenings & weekends)

Remember, each VPD compromises the safety of Merrill Field operations. We appreciate your help and vigilance in eliminating this significant problem.

Shop at Merrill Field for any occasion

Don't panic about picking up that last minute gift for the aviator on your list. Many Merrill Field businesses offer gift certificates for items and services such as aircraft parts, pilot supplies, and training. Also, if your pilot is tired of punching the keypad code to access an aircraft apron, one of our proximity "Smart Cards" would make a great stocking stuffer!

Seasonal Snippets

Raven Reminder: Leaving dumpster lids open and overfilling trash cans is considered a bird attractant and is a violation of Anchorage Municipal Code. We ask you to do your part to discourage raven activity and promptly report raven damage to the Airport Manager's Office, 343-6303. We appreciate your assistance.

Ski operations only on RWY 05-23 and Whiskey apron, please: During the snow season, only ski equipped aircraft can operate on Runway 05/23 (no wheel operations); likewise, do not drive your vehicle or taxi your wheeled aircraft on the Whiskey taxiway or aircraft apron. Ruts, caused by wheel operations, make it nearly impossible for ski-equipped aircraft to maneuver. To load and unload your aircraft, we recommend you either taxi your aircraft to the vehicle parking area or transport your items by sled from your vehicle to your aircraft.

Don't overload your circuit: The outlets in the municipal tiedown spaces are protected by a circuit breaker which allows for a medium size engine heater (maximum 1500 watts). If your electrical outlet does not have power, the circuit breaker may have been tripped due to an overload. Should you experience this problem, contact the Airport Manager's Office; we'll reset the breaker or determine if there is another problem.

Snow Removal Priorities: The objective of our Snow Removal Plan is to have the Airport runways open and functional as soon as possible after a new snowfall; taxiways, roadways, tiedown aprons and vehicle parking areas are cleared of snow next. Keep in mind that each time a snowfall event occurs the priority reverts to runways and taxiways even if the other areas have not been cleared of a prior snowfall. If you have specific snow removal concerns, please call the Airport Manager's Office.

Aviation Events

Wednesday, January 8: Merrill Field Users Group Meeting

A Merrill Field Users Group Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Airport Manager's Office, 800 Merrill Field Drive, Anchorage, AK 99501. Airport users are encouraged to meet with airport management to discuss concerns and share improvement ideas. Call 343-6303 for more details.

Wednesday, January 8: Ninety Nines - Alaska Chapter Monthly Meeting

The 99s meet the second Wednesday of each month at the Denny's Restaurant, 3950 Debarr Road, 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. Request more information at flyquilt@mtaonline.net or call Melanie Hancock at 694-4571.

Thursday, January 9: Municipal Airports Aviation Advisory Commission Meeting

Bi-monthly meetings are held at the Anchorage Fire Training Center, 1140 Airport Heights, Bldg. A, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. For more information, call the Airport Manager's Office, 343-6303.

February 18 – 20: AACA Annual Convention

The aviation community is invited to the Alaska Air Carriers Association annual convention February 18-20 at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage. To register, visit the AACA website: http://www.alaskaaircarriers.org/servlet/content/2014_aaca_convention_feb_18_20.html

Merrill Field Airport Bulletin, Published Quarterly

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