

**Merrill Field,
Alaska's First
Official Airport**



**Providing over
75 Years
of Service**

MERRILL FIELD BULLETIN

Current News About Your Airport

www.muni.org/merrill1/merrill1.cfm

June, 2008

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MERRILL FIELD

Summer is here and Merrill Field is gearing up for another busy season. Visitors and local pedestrians alike are visiting our airport to view aircraft or to enjoy the summer weather by casually strolling on our trail system. Whatever the reason for being at Merrill Field, please be aware that construction is in full swing and that people might be wandering around your apron. As an airport user, you have the right to ask an individual why they are on the airport. After all, your vigilance is one way of preventing a vehicle or pedestrian deviation. Safety and security awareness is everyone's business including yours!

As in previous summers, we are grateful for your continued patience while construction is underway around the field. This year we will be working on these capital improvement projects:

Rehabilitate Aircraft Aprons -

- Block 5 Apron Rehabilitation (located adjacent to Taxiways Quebec and Golf) – This is Phase 3 of a multi-phased project. The contract has been awarded to Alaska Interstate Construction, LLC. Work to include aircraft apron surface grading, drainage improvements and apron & taxiway lighting. Anticipated start is the end of June with completion expected in October, 2008. Apron rehabilitation in the vicinity of Golf apron near Taxiway Quebec will impact several tie-down customers. Airport management will work with the affected customers on the temporary relocation of their aircraft.

Security Improvements -

- Public Address System Upgrade – This system is used by MRI Air Traffic Controllers to convey warning notification from the tower to the potential pedestrian/vehicle surface incursion. This will enhance safety and security of the airport's operation. The contract has been awarded to Haakenson Electric, Inc.

Be cognitive also of other construction projects such as the hangar development along the west side of the airport (Orca Street) and the Glenn Highway construction project (Airport Frontage Road).

Last but not the least; we are working closely with FAA Runway Safety Office to revise our Driver Training Program (DTP). The revision will reflect the airport remarks in the Merrill Field section of the Alaska Supplement that "all aircraft in non-movement areas must contact ground control prior to taxi". The Alaska Supplement and the ATCT have authority if there is conflict between the DTP and the Supplement.

Glenn Highway Project Update

The State of Alaska DOT/PF recently awarded the Glenn Highway widening project to Alaska Interstate Construction (AIC). The Federally funded project will widen the highway along Merrill Field Airport from four lanes to six lanes. AIC began work on the highway in May and is scheduled to have most of the work done by fall.

This project changes the access to the businesses and tiedown aprons along the north side of the Airport, there will be four cul-de-sac access points into the airport along that portion of the highway. In addition, there will be new airport security fencing and vehicle gates along the entire length of the project.

The DOT/PF and AIC are trying to do their best to minimize the impact upon the Airport users. If you have questions about the project, please contact Frank Chandler, Project Manager or Ray Thomas, Project Superintendent at Alaska Interstate Construction, 907-562-2792 or Ken Thomas, Construction Project Manager, State DOT/PF, 907-269-0454.

For more information about the project please visit The Alaska Navigator, DOT's road construction webpage, at www.alaskanavigator.org.

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:

Jul 10, Sep 4, Nov 6

Commissioner Term Exp.

Rick Davis	10/14/08
Don DeVoe	10/14/10
Dick Armstrong	10/14/09
Anthony Follett	10/14/09
Allen Kemplen	10/14/09
Erin Marston	10/14/10
Jim Powell	10/14/08

Statistics

Operations:

June '07 – May '08: 163,427
2008 Based Aircraft: 892

Commission will meet on July 10

Please note that the next Municipal Airports Aviation Advisory Commission meeting will be held on Thursday, July 10. The meeting was rescheduled to accommodate those who will be out of town for the July 4th, Independence Day, Holiday.

Mayor Appoints New Airport Commissioners

The Municipal Airports Aviation Advisory Commissioners are dedicated volunteers who donate several hours of their time reviewing airport procedures and making recommendations to the Administration and the Assembly on airport operations. Earlier this year, the Assembly confirmed Mayor Begich's appointments of Don DeVoe and Jim Powell to the Airport Advisory Commission. Their dedication to and interest in municipal airports are a great contribution to the Commission's endeavors.

The Commission meets the first Thursday of each odd-numbered month. If you want first-hand information about your airport please plan to attend. For meeting location and agenda information, please call the Airport Manager's Office, 343-6303.

Pilot observation and intervention could prevent a runway incursion

The summer vehicle and pedestrian activity has increased on Merrill Field, and it is extremely important that all airport users become aware of individuals who might not have authorized access to the airport operations area. You may be able to help alleviate a potential runway incursion by offering to assist those who appear to be lost and by keeping the airport operation area vehicle gates closed at all times. Remember that an unauthorized runway crossing is a hazard to the flying public. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

TOWER TALK

I would like to start off with updates and changes here at MRI ATCT. The Big News, Merrill Tower Chief, Jack Schommer, has moved into retirement. We wish Jack well as he makes the transition. My name is Kent Wheeler and I will be serving as the interim manager here at MRI until another manager is selected. I have been in Alaska for two winters and normally serve as the Operations Manager over at Anchorage approach (A11). Anchorage is my sixth facility in a 19+ year career. I look forward to meeting each of you as we strive to meet the needs of MRI's pilots and neighbors, while maintaining a safe friendly environment.

We have had an eventful spring, while traffic is still down compared to last year; we have had to work through several incidents involving aircraft mishaps. Please stay alert and safe as we go into summer.

MRI Helicopter traffic has steadily increased over the past few years and in an effort to better serve those in the rotary crowd, we have put together a few recommendations:

- ❖ When departing, please contact Ground Control first. This allows us to put your flight information (ATIS code, direction of flight) into the normal fixed wing flow. This prevents Local Control from playing twenty questions on the already crowded tower frequency and may actually reduce your delays.
- ❖ Please avoid over flying parked and especially taxiing aircraft as you maneuver on/above the airport.
- ❖ When practicing on or near Runway 4/22, remain west of Alaska Regional Hospital and maneuver within the airport boundary to the extent possible.
- ❖ We appreciate the opportunity to provide you quality Air Traffic Controller Services.

The Elmendorf AFB Air Show is the last weekend of June (28th and 29th), the Thunderbirds will be performing. Along with the Air Show comes the Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs), there will be a range of impacts at MRI, these restrictions will be in use during the show and various other times the previous week, during practice periods. Please don't forget to check with Flight Service for updated times and descriptions.

I know that Mr. Schommer had an open invitation to the local pilot community to visit the tower and staff; I would like to see that continue. As long as security levels stay where they are, I ask only that you phone in advance to ensure that someone is available to show you around and answer any questions.

Please join us as we strive for a great, safe summer and please FLY MRI.

Kent Wheeler, Interim Air Traffic Manager
Merrill Tower, 271-2698



Apron Safety

Undoubtedly, this is the fantastic flying season that many of us have been waiting for. It is so easy to be preoccupied with last minute preparations and pre-flight checks that we can forget there might be people nearby who are unfamiliar with aircraft. Be extra vigilant when starting your engine and taxiing your aircraft; you never know when an unsuspecting bike rider or pedestrian might be coming your way. Blue skies and safe flying!!!

Seasonal Snippets

✓ *Noise Reduction Reminder*

Pilots departing Merrill Field can help reduce noise by maintaining the lowest propeller RPM setting necessary for safe flight, utilizing the entire runway length (no intersection departures), remaining at the recommended pattern altitude as long as possible over residential areas and following the established traffic pattern until transitioning to the appropriate VFR departure route. Aircraft needing to use higher power settings for operational purposes, please request Runway 7 or 25. Also, please plan training flights in higher performance aircraft during midday if possible. Thanks for your consideration, and enjoy your flying summer.

✓ *Aircraft wash facility opens for the season*

The aircraft wash facility is now available for your use. When using the facility, please abide by the following guidelines:

- No dumping of used oil or grease at the washing facility
- Wash the surface of the facility after each use
- Use environmentally friendlier products whenever practical
- Use phosphate-free detergents whenever possible

These guidelines are meant to ease the work of the sanitary treatment system in treating wastewater, as well as to help ensure fewer potential pollutants come into contact with storm water. Thank you for your cooperation! *AMC 11.60.34, Washing of Aircraft*

✓ *Asphalt repair work continues*

The annual crack-sealing program will soon be in full swing for the 2008 summer season. This year, the crew will be returning to those areas they were not able to complete in previous seasons. Some aircraft tiedown aprons might be affected by this work; therefore, we urge you to exercise caution and be aware of this activity as you taxi around the airport.

✓ *Scoop the poop – it's the law*

If you exercise your pet on airport property, please be courteous to others and clean up behind it. People who enjoy walking and exercising on Merrill Field have been finding unwanted piles; please do your part by picking up your dog's droppings.

AMC 11.60.270 (\$75 fine for animals that are held or maintained improperly – AMC 14.60.030)
AMC 17.10.015 (\$100 for each violation – AMC 17.70.020)

Aviation Events

June 23-28 Garmin Week at Northern Lights Avionics. Call 277-4811 for Special Deals! BBQ on Saturday the 28th.
<http://www.northernlightsavionics.com>

June 28 - 29 Arctic Thunder, Elmendorf Air Show - The Air Force Thunderbirds are scheduled to perform.
<http://www.elmendorf.af.mil/library/arcticthunder/index.asp>

July 4 Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum's Annual "Salmon Bake" Celebrates 4th of July at Lake Hood. Call 248-5325 for details!

July 11 - 12 Dawson City Memorial Fly-In – Dates are tentative; call the Airmen's Association at 245-1251 for details.

August 7 - 10 Ninety Nines (99's) International Conference - Anchorage, Alaska. Go to www.ak99s.org for conference information.

September 19 "Alaska Air Carriers Annual Dinner"- Speaker, Barrington Irving, the first African American to fly solo around the world. Visit www.alaskaaircarriers.org for information.

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