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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*

*March, 2014
www.muni.org/merrill1/merrill1.cfm*

What's Happening at Merrill Field

Spring is just around the corner and Merrill Field is gearing up for another busy summer season with these planned capital improvement projects—all of which are dependent on receipt of federal Airport Improvement Program funding, of course.

- ➔ **Rehabilitate Taxiway Quebec, Phase 4** – This project is the continuation of the on-going multi-phased dynamic compaction construction projects along Taxiway Quebec. This summer's project will encompass an area on Taxiway Q to the east of the Taxiway G intersection. Detour routes--signage and barricades--will be in place on site and coordination with users will occur as we get closer to the project start date. Anticipated construction is during the July/September timeframe.
- ➔ **Security Upgrades, Lights, Cameras and Signage, Phase 3** – This project will be the latest in a continuation of the on-going multi-phased security improvement program. The plan is to install a fiber optic cable line on the north side of the airport, along 5th Avenue, to provide reliable data and video transmission to MRI security cameras and the vehicle gate system. Existing wireless broadband transmissions are unreliable. Along with this fiber optic installation, additional cameras will be installed to enable recording of unauthorized access/entry into the movement areas are anticipated.

In addition to the above mentioned projects, we are coordinating with our contractors on completion of the following projects:

- ➔ **RWY Lighting Electrical Vault Upgrade** – The project entails removal of the old voltage regulators, diesel standby generator, and Airfield Lighting Control Systems (ALCS) control distribution panels and replacement with new voltage regulators, runway electrical vault panels and a new standby generator. Planned completion of this project is summer, 2014.
- ➔ **Security Improvements (Cameras/Lights/Signage/Fencing), Phase 2** – Our contractor, Alcan General, is still working on this project. A fiber optic line was installed last summer/fall along Merrill Field Drive (from 15th Avenue to Airport Heights) to support communication reliability to the camera system. This project includes the installation of new hi-def cameras along Merrill Field Drive and at both the Airport Heights and 15th Ave./Lake Otis entrances to the airport. Network configuration and integration are still underway to assimilate the legacy analog cameras into the new system. The remaining work for this project includes integration of the legacy cameras and the new cameras into the new server and website update.
- ➔ **The MRI Airport Master Plan Update and Noise Study** is also underway. Progress to date can be found at MRI's Airport Master Plan website, <http://www.merrillfieldmasterplan.com/>

Also, FYI, the MOA/MRI is in the process of acquiring the current City Electric, Inc. property located at 819 Orca Street, under a "willing seller/willing buyer" protocol. Ultimately this site will become available for additional hangar development/construction.

MRI businesses to be showcased at MAAAC meetings

MRI business owners are invited to introduce, or reintroduce, themselves at the Municipal Airports Aviation Advisory Commission (MAAAC) meetings. Five minutes or so will be incorporated into each MAAAC meeting agenda starting May 1 to allow a business owner to showcase what they do for the MRI flying community. The Commissioners and public are interested in getting to know you and learn about the services you provide.

This opportunity will be offered on a first-come first-served basis, so please call Darlene soon at 343-6308 to get your business introduction on the agenda. One such "business intro" per meeting is anticipated.

Merrill Field Users Group Meeting Recap

The first quarterly Merrill Field Users Group meeting with the Airport Manager was held in January, and attendees deemed it a success. Some of the items discussed were security camera status, fiber optic connectivity to businesses, taxiway barrier gate operations, snow removal, IFR departure changes and rotorcraft operations.

All are invited to attend these informative/discussion meetings; our goal is to meet once each quarter. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 2 at 3:00 p.m. in the Airport Manager's Office conference room, 800 Merrill Field Drive. An annual schedule will be established at that meeting. If you have any questions, call the Airport Manager's Office at 343-6303.

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:

May 1, July 10, Sep 4, Nov 6

<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:

Mar, 2013 – Feb, 2014: 126,866
2013 Based Aircraft: 833

Exit Runway 5-23 at designated connectors only

Several folks have commented on mid-field departures/excursions from the Runway 5-23 'Ski Strip' onto the Whiskey taxiway, rather than more properly exiting at TWY connectors Lima, Golf or Tango. This is neither a safe or good practice from at least two perspectives:

- Departing the ski strip mid-field creates an opportunity for an aircraft taxiing or about to start taxiing on Whiskey to be blind-sided by an aircraft suddenly arriving mid-field/mid-taxiway upon exiting 5-23.
- The 5-23 runway edge reflectors may or may not be visible due to varying snow depths on the ski strip; markers just under the snow surface can be hit, damaging either the marker or aircraft skis.

Either scenario is unappealing!

Therefore, all Runway 5-23 users are asked to employ safe and best practices by entering and exiting the runway only at the designated taxiway connectors L, G, or T. (Keeping in mind of course, that while the Whiskey taxiway and apron is 'un-controlled,' RWY 5-23 is a 'controlled' surface and ATCT communication is necessary for use thereof.) Your cooperation in this regard is appreciated.

Security Protocol

When using a vehicle gate, wait until the gate is fully closed before leaving the area. This will minimize the opportunity for unauthorized drivers to tailgate through and gain access to the movement area. The need for this was clearly demonstrated by a recent late night event wherein an authorized user entering at the Whiskey gate properly waited for the gate to close after him; thereby, thwarting an awaiting would-be piggy-backer who abruptly left when the authorized user backed closer to see who was attempting to follow on. If the would-be piggy-backer had been a legitimate user, they likely would not have departed as they did.

Tower Talk

As always, thank you for your continued professionalism. Since summer we have had some challenges with vehicle deviations. Be cognizant of your surroundings and airport markings. Current NOTAMS and Letters to Airmen can be found at <http://notams.aim.faa.gov/notamSearch/>. Don't forget about safety and if you need something, don't hesitate to call. If you are doing any vehicle operations in close proximity to a taxiway, be sure to call/communicate such activity with the tower or airport.



Readbacks

Just a reminder that ATC needs a read back of your call sign (November, Tango, or type aircraft followed by the last 3) with the runway number and any hold short requirements all in one transmission or we will ask for it again.

Flying friendly

We all need to be good neighbors. Fly the routes established in the Alaska Supplement. Cutting corners and flying over houses instead of staying over green belts, roads, and less populated areas generates noise complaints and noise complaints lead to demands for operational constraints. Please do not jeopardize future MRI operations to save seconds on arrival or departure.

Communicate

Don't forget, tours are available. It is a great way to get questions answered and for controllers and pilots to meet. We can also come to you for a CFI meeting or pilot briefing. If in doubt, ask for clarification. It is really easy to say you don't understand or to call and ask a question. Reduce the risk, be safe!

Brian Ochs, Manager
Merrill Field ATCT
271-2698

Remember to "Fly Friendly"

Pilots departing Merrill Field can help reduce noise by maintaining the lowest propeller RPM setting necessary for safe flight, 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. For aircraft needing to use high power settings for operational purposes, please request Runway 7 or 25. Also, pilots should plan training flights in higher performance aircraft during midday if possible. For complete guidelines on how to minimize aircraft noise over our adjoining, residential neighborhoods, click the "Fly Friendly" link on our web page http://www.muni.org/departments/merrill_field/pages/default.aspx.

Recent taxiway deviations were preventable

MRI experienced 13 Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations (VPD's) in 2013. On a VPD/# of operations ratio, MRI ranked 2nd in the nation for runway incursions (vehicle/pedestrian deviation and operational incident). This is not good! Moreover, all of the deviations could have been prevented by:

- Communication - knowing to communicate with the FAA Tower. When you are on the apron area and plan to access the taxiway side (i.e. cross the yellow line that separates the apron and taxiway), be it snow removal or work related, call the Tower and inform them of your intention.
- Familiarization – knowing where you are with your surrounding. When you are driving along the taxiways, make sure that your vehicle is on the apron side not straddling the solid yellow line (this is very germane to Taxiways Alpha, November, and Charlie), and be safe by planning your route ahead of time.
- Observation – be familiar with the signage installed around the airport. These signs are there to guide and inform you.

When in doubt, don't hesitate to call FAA ATCT Ground Control on the radio at 121.70.

March 26 Emergency/Disaster Drill Planned

Merrill Field Airport (MRI) will hold a "wheels rolling" airfield emergency/disaster drill mid-morning, Wednesday, March 26. The drill will include AFD, APD, FAA Air Traffic Control Tower, FAA Airports Div. observer, and MRI staff. A simulated aircraft crash on the north-south runway (16-34) is planned. This drill and timing thereof will be coordinated with air service providers to minimize schedule disruptions.

MRI has not conducted an airport disaster drill for some years and this is the first of what will be at least twice per year exercises to ensure participant readiness and communication currency.

Seasonal Snippets

Check Your Ropes: After the wet, windy days of winter, pilots should check their aircraft tie-down ropes for signs of wear and deterioration. Replace any and all ropes that show symptoms of fraying or your aircraft might take off without you.

Report Ravens: Thanks to all Merrill Field vendors for keeping dumpster lids closed and for not overfilling trash cans--a proactive approach to minimizing raven attractants on the field. It is very important to promptly report all raven damage to the Airport Manager's Office, 343-6303. We appreciate your assistance.

Aircraft Wash Open Soon: The aircraft wash facility will be available for your use as soon as the day and nighttime temperatures remain above freezing. 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, and use phosphate-free detergents whenever possible. This facility is for aircraft use only.

UAA & MRI internship program established

The UAA Aviation Technology Division has, for several years, had an Aviation Administration B.S. degree program, but no internship program to go with it. MRI and UAA have collaborated to develop one, and our first unpaid internship is underway.

A very personable, six-year USAF veteran, and soon to-be an Aviation Administration UAA graduate, Mr. Lindsey Loewen is becoming very familiar with the tasks involved in operating a GA airport including administration, finance, capital improvement projects management and airfield maintenance. We are very pleased to have Lindsey with us for several hours each week, and yes, he is in the job market.

Do you know where the

TWY Golf / RWY 5-23 hold line really is?

Many pilots think the south Taxiway Golf hold line for access to Runway 5-23 is on the north side of the taxiway barrier gate; however, the taxiway hold line is about 75 ft. south of the gate. When accessing the Runway 5-23 movement area, it is preferable to taxi south on TWY Golf and go through the gate opening before communicating with the tower. If you need more information, please call the ATCT at 271-3121.

MRI aerial photo available online

Ever have the need to get a bird's-eye view of Merrill Field? An aerial photo is available on the Merrill Field home page (link below). Just under the Merrill Field logo you'll find links to a Merrill Field Location Map and the 2011 Aerial Photo. The runways, taxiways and businesses are clearly marked on the photo which is periodically updated (next update is likely late 2014).

http://www.muni.org/departments/merrill_field/pages/default.aspx

Aviation Events

A list of several aviation related events can be found on the Merrill Field website. On our home page you'll see Airport News & Events on the left sidebar; clicking on this link will open the page you need. Or, you can go directly to

http://www.muni.org/Departments/merrill_field/Pages/Newsletters.aspx

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