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# ADVISORY CIRCULAR

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

**SUBJECT:** GUIDANCE FOR AIRPORT OPERATORS - USE OF  
NOTICES TO AIRMEN AS RELATED TO FAR PART 139

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1. PURPOSE. This circular provides the airport operator with guidance on Notices to Airmen and assists him in understanding the system in relation to the requirements of FAR Part 139.
  2. BACKGROUND.
    - a. The Federal Aviation Act of 1958 was amended on May 21, 1970, by adding Section 612, paragraph (a) of which provides "(a) the Administrator is empowered to issue airport operating certificates to airports serving air carriers certificated by the Civil Aeronautics Board and to establish minimum safety standards for the operation of such airports." The FAA issued rules for airport certification in FAR Part 139.
    - b. FAR Part 139 requires the airport operator to furnish the FAA with specific safety information concerning his airport under a variety of conditions. This advisory circular is intended for use by airport operators to insure timely dissemination of pertinent airport safety information that could affect air carrier operations and airport safety. It includes examples of typical situations anticipated under the various sections of FAR Part 139.
  3. REFERENCES.
    - a. FAA Order, Flight Services 7110.10B - January 1, 1973 (copies limited).
    - b. FAR Part 139, Certification and Operations: Land Airports Serving CAB-Certificated Air Carriers.
    - c. AC 150/5280-1, Airport Operations Manual, June 1972.
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Initiated by: AAS-710

d. AC 150/5200-18, Airport Safety Self-Inspection, February 1972.

4. HOW TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL COPIES.

FAA Order 7110.10B, FAR Part 139, and advisory circulars referenced above may be obtained as follows:

- a. FAA Order 7110.10B, Flight Services, dated January 1973 may be obtained from the U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402. Make check or money order for \$24 (includes quarterly changes for two years) payable to Superintendent of Documents. No C.O.D. orders are accepted.
- b. Federal Aviation Regulation Part 139, Certification and Operations: Land Airports Serving CAB-Certificated Air Carriers, Volume X, may be obtained from the U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402. Make check or money order for \$7.00 (additional \$1.75 for foreign mailing), payable to the Superintendent of Documents. No C.O.D. orders are accepted.
- c. Copies of this advisory circular and others referenced above may be obtained from the Department of Transportation, Distribution Unit, TAD-484.3, Washington, D. C. 20590.



CLYDE W. PACE, Jr.  
Director, Airports Service

## CHAPTER 1. GENERAL

1. INTRODUCTION. Notices to Airmen have long been used and understood by the majority of airport operators. Part 139 of the Federal Aviation Regulations requires that the applicant for an airport operating certificate must advise the air carrier users of conditions on and in the vicinity of the airport that affect or may affect the safe operation of aircraft. Notices to Airmen is one means by which information may be disseminated. Section 139.69 of the rule also states that other appropriate means, acceptable to the Administrator may be used for disseminating information. These means would be included and approved in the Airport Operations Manual. This advisory circular will only address Notices to Airmen.
2. NOTICES TO AIRMEN. Notices to Airmen provide information to personnel concerned with the planning or actual conduct of flight operations. This system includes two methods of data dissemination, NOTAM and AIRAD. The requirement in FAR Part 139 to use Notices to Airmen might involve either or both of these dissemination methods depending on the nature of information.
  - a. NOTAM - Information which must be handled on a time-critical basis because it would affect a pilots' decision to make a flight.
  - b. AIRAD - Information of an advisory nature that can be given to the pilot on an "as needed" basis, either before departure, while enroute, or before landing, is given local distribution as an AIRAD.
3. AIRMAN'S INFORMATION MANUAL (AIM). Another source of data available to a pilot concerning airport conditions is the Airman's Information Manual (AIM). The AIM contains, in Part 3A, that Notices to Airmen information which has existed for some time. This Part of the AIM is published at 14 day intervals.
4. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION. Distribution of important safety information is a joint responsibility, with the airport operator normally originating the data and the FAA providing necessary dissemination. FAR Part 139 dictates many situations that must be reported to the FAA for dissemination by Notices to Airmen. It is most important that the airport operator understand his own responsibility in providing the basic data, in clear, concise language, to the FAA, normally through the Flight Service Station (FSS) and/or the local control tower. It is the responsibility of the FAA personnel (FSS), based on agency criteria, to determine the appropriate method of

distribution, whether the source of data is the airport operator or other acceptable and identified source. He should also make every effort to provide this data as far in advance as possible.

5. CONTENT. This advisory circular highlights pertinent aspects of the existing system, placing them into focus so that compliance with Part 139 is simplified. Much of the contents of the circular are extracted from the applicable FAA documents to provide the airport operator with necessary background information and its relation to his own particular function.

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CHAPTER 2. REQUIREMENTS AND EXAMPLES  
FAR PART 139

6. APPLICABILITY. One of the prime responsibilities of the airport operator with respect to aviation safety is to report all unusual or problem areas to the users of the airport. Notices to Airmen, as the principle means of disseminating airport information, is primarily dependent upon airport management's input. It is important that the airport operator give the FAA facility (FSS and/or tower) all pertinent facts as soon as the problem is known or anticipated. The Flight Service Station (FAA) will determine the appropriate method of dissemination (NOTAM or AIRAD).

FAR Part 139 requires appropriate dissemination of information based upon the various sections of the rule. The following examples are general in nature. Every situation requiring reporting is different and must be evaluated by both airport management and the FAA facility.

7. AIRPORT CONDITION ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING. (SECTION 139.69 AND 139.111)

- a. The applicant for an airport operating certificate must show it has appropriate procedures for identifying, assessing, and disseminating information to air carrier users of its airport, by Notices to Airmen or other means acceptable to the Administrator, concerning conditions on and in the vicinity of its airport that affect, or may affect, the safe operation of aircraft.

- b. The procedure prescribed by paragraph (a) of this section must cover the following conditions:

- (1) Construction or maintenance work on pavement or safety areas.

Example: (Information from airport operator to FAA facility).

Airport name - Construction Runway 18-36 between 0700-1300  
LCL daily. Closed to all traffic during those time periods.

- (2) "Rough or wavy portions of pavement or safety areas."

Example: (Information from airport operator to FAA facility).

Airport name - Initial 3000 ft. East end Runway 9-27  
extremely rough.

- (3) "The presence and depth of snow, slush, ice, or water on runways or taxiways

Example: (Information from airport operator to FAA facility).

Airport name - All taxiways severe icing next 6 hours.  
Runways sanded.

- (4) "The presence of snow drifted or piled on, or next to runways or taxiways in such height that all aircraft propellers, engine pods, and wingtips will not clear the snowdrifts and snowbanks when the aircraft's most critical landing gear is located at any point along the full strength edge of the runway or taxiway."

Example: (Information from airport operator to FAA facility).

Airport name - Drifting snow - snow piles 3 ft. high adjacent Runway 9-27. Runway width restricted to 150 ft.

- (5) "The presence of parked aircraft or other objects on, or next to, runways or taxiways."

Example: (Information from airport operator to FAA facility).

Airport name - Taxiway adjacent Runway 3-21 closed 1300-1800 LCL daily due to parked aircraft until further notice.

- (6) "The failure or irregular operation of all or part of the airport lighting system, including the approach, threshold, runway, taxiway and obstruction lights operated by the operator of the airport."

Example: (Information from airport operator to FAA facility).

Airport name - Runway 6-24 lights out. Closed for night operations 1900 till 0600 LCL. Until further notice.

- (7) "The presence of a large number of birds."

Example: (Information from airport operator to FAA facility).

Airport name - Heavy concentration birds 1600-1900 LCL daily - South side airport.

8. OPERATIONS RULES: GENERAL. (SECTION 139.81)

"Each person operating an airport for which an airport operating certificate has been issued under Subpart B of this part shall -

- a. Operate, maintain, and provide facilities, equipment, systems, and procedures at least equal in condition, quality, and quantity to the standards currently required for the issue of the airport operating certificate for that airport;

- b. Have sufficient personnel available, and require that personnel, to comply with its approved airport operations manual in the performance of their duties; and
- c. Comply with the additional rules of this subpart."

Example: (Information from airport operator to FAA facility).

Airport name - Airport maintenance and fire fighters on strike effective 1600 LCL, August 15. Airport closed to CAB-Certificated air carrier aircraft till further notice.

9. SNOW REMOVAL AND POSITIONING. (SECTION 139.85 AND 139.125)

"The operator of each certificated airport shall move any drifted or piled snow off usable runway and taxiway surfaces and (except as otherwise authorized in its approved airport operations manual) position any snow or snowbank off those surfaces in height so regulated that all aircraft propellers, engine pods, and wingtips will clear snowdrifts and snowbanks when the aircraft's most critical landing gear is located at any point along the full strength edge of the runway or taxiway. When unable to comply promptly with this requirement, the operator shall issue a Notice to Airmen describing the existing condition."

Example: (Information from airport operator to FAA Facility).

Airport name - Snow conditions severe. Average depth - 6 inches. Runway 3-21 plowed open to air carriers. Use caution while taxiing.

10. AIRPORT FIREFIGHTING AND RESCUE EQUIPMENT AND SERVICE. (SECTION 139.89 AND 139.127)

"The operator of each certificated airport shall at all times comply with the following:

- a. Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, it shall provide the required firefighting and rescue equipment and service prescribed in 139.49 during all periods of scheduled aircraft operations.....
- c. When any required firefighting or rescue vehicle becomes inoperable, it shall provide appropriate replacement equipment within 8 hours thereafter. However, if appropriate replacement equipment is not available within that period, it shall promptly issue a Notice to Airmen. When a Notice to Airmen is issued, and the service level is not restored within 10 calendar days after the date of that notice, the operator shall (unless otherwise authorized by the Administrator), until that service level is restored, limit the air carrier user operations on the airport to the requirements of the Index (no lower



than Index A) prescribed in 139.49 that provides the protection capability of the operator's remaining equipment. When the one vehicle required in Index A is inoperable and a Notice to Airmen is issued, and the service level is not restored within 10 calendar days, air carrier user operations on the airport must be discontinued."

Examples: (Information from airport operator to FAA facility).

After 8 hours. Airport name - Airport CFR temporarily operating at FAR 139 Index B capability as of 1600 LCL, August 13.

After 10 days. Airport name - Airport CFR restricted to FAR 139, Index B capability.

APPENDIX 1 - DEFINITIONS

(Extracted from FAA Order 7110.10B, Flight Services)

1. AIRMAN'S INFORMATION MANUAL (AIM). ALASKA AIRMAN "T" GUIDE (AIRGI). PACIFIC CHART SUPPLEMENT. An FAA publication which contains information about the status of components of the National Airspace System, flight data, procedures, and other operational information which serves as a preflight and inflight reference for pilots. (When the term "AIM" is used in this handbook it is understood to mean the Alaskan AIRGI or the Pacific Chart Supplement where these apply).  
  
(Editorial information concerning airports, navigational aids, and other vital aviation data is located in Part 3, "Operational Data and Notices to Airmen" which is published every 56 days and in Part 3A, "Notices to Airmen" which is issued every 14 days).
2. NOTICE TO AIRMEN. A notice identified either as a NOTAM or AIRAD containing information concerning the establishment, condition, or change to any components of, or hazard in the National Airspace System, the timely knowledge of which is essential to personnel concerned with flight operations.
3. NOTAM. A Notice to Airmen in message form requiring expeditious and wide dissemination by telecommunication means. (Editorial contains, among other things, information important to pilot in his determination as to suitability of airport for his use).
4. AIRAD-AIRMEN ADVISORY. A Notice to Airmen normally given only local dissemination, during preflight or inflight briefing, or otherwise during contact with pilots. (Editorial contains no information which would preclude a pilot from clearing to a particular airport).
5. NATIONAL FLIGHT DATA CENTER (NFDC). A facility established by FAA to operate a central aeronautical information service for the collection, validation, and dissemination of aeronautical data in support of the activities of government, industry, and the aviation community.
6. FLIGHT SERVICE STATION (FSS). The Air Traffic facilities which have the prime responsibility for preflight pilot briefing, en route communications with VFR flights, assisting lost VFR aircraft, (originating, classifying and disseminating Notices to Airmen), broadcasting aviation weather and NAS information, accepting and closing flight plans, monitoring radio NAVAIDS, participating with search and rescue units in locating missing VFR Aircraft, and operating the national weather teletypewriter system.

In addition, at selected locations, FSS's take weather observations, issue airport advisories, administer airman written examinations, and advise Customs and Immigration of transborder flights.

APPENDIX 2 - AIRMEN INFORMATION

(Extracts from Chapter 7, Airmen Information, FAA Order 7110.10B, Flight Services)

The following extracts from the FAA Flight Services Handbook (Order 7110.10B) are considered pertinent to the airport operator in that they provide him a greater understanding of the Notice to Airmen System and selected instructions to the FAA Air Traffic personnel responsible for the System.

## 481. POLICY

Accept and classify all Airmen information, regardless of source or subject matter, and disseminate as Notice to Airmen all information that is not otherwise available to airmen and other aviation interests and the lack of which may have an adverse effect on the safety of flight.

NOTE. FSS specialists are solely responsible for the classification and dissemination of Notice to Airmen data.

NOTAMS - LANDING AREAS

## 530. General

Airport management is responsible for observing and reporting the condition of landing areas.

a. Accept airport condition reports from airport employees only if:

- (1) The airport management has provided a list of personnel authorized to issue this information.
- (2) The name of the person reporting the condition is listed.

b. At a landing area where an airport manager has not been designated and no other suitable arrangements have been made, the airport condition shall be reported by the air traffic specialist or technician, depending on the facilities available at the airport.

## 531. Handling Reported Landing Area Conditions

Copy verbatim any information received verbally and record the name of the person submitting the information. Information obtained from other than an airport or FAA employee must be confirmed before issuance. If you are informed of or observe a condition which affects the safe use of a landing area; e.g., disabled aircraft on runway, relay the information to the airport management for action. If unable to contact the airport management, issue a Notice to Airmen publicizing the unsafe condition; e.g., 14-32 UNSAFE DISABLED ACFT. Inform the airport management of the action taken as soon thereafter as practicable.

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### 533. Landing Area NOTAMS

Report the following as a NOTAM:

- a. Airport closed.
- b. RVR or RVV equipment inoperative.
- c. Braking action when NIL.
- d. Report condition which restrict/preclude the use of a hard-surface runway when the runway falls into any or all of the airport.
  - (1) It is longest available runway on the airport.
  - (2) It is served by an instrument approach procedure with straight-in minimums.
  - (3) It is 4000 feet or more in length.
- e. Snow conditions. Specify depth and type.
- f. Slush or standing water conditions. Specify depth and type.

### 534. Certificated Airports

All airports certificated under FAR Part 139 are prohibited from conducting scheduled air carrier operations under conditions which violate the airport operating certificate. Accept for Service A dissemination Notice to Airmen furnished by airport management which prohibit Index A, B, C, D, and E air carrier aircraft from the use of a Part 139 certificated airport.

EXAMPLES: ARPT CLSD ACR  
ARPT CLSD FAR 139 INDEX (letters) ACFT

### LANDING AREA-AIRADS

### 550. Conditions Disseminated as AIRADS

Disseminate the following landing area information as AIRADS:

- a. Air show or parachute jumping activity, unless it closes the airport or prohibits the use of airspace. When disseminating jumping information, include the dates, time, situations, duration, and location of the jumping activity.
- b. Data pertaining to arresting barriers.
- c. Men and equipment on or adjacent to runway; e.g., grass mowing.
- d. Information pertaining to hours of operation of field facilities.
- e. Conditions which restrict/preclude the use of runways other than those prescribed in 533.d.

- f. Conditions pertaining to taxiways and ramps.
- g. Report braking action, other than NIL, as an AIRAD.
- h. Availability of fuel.
- i. Airport fire fighting and rescue equipment and service.  
(Applicable only when CFR Index is not affected.)
- j. Hazardous bird activity.

### LIGHTING AID NOTAMS

#### 560. General

Originate Notices to Airmen concerning conditions of landing aid lights you are responsible for controlling or monitoring. Commercial operators are required to report to an FAA facility antenna tower obstruction light operating status. Reporting the operating status of other types of obstruction lights is the responsibility of the appropriate operator. (FSS Part 17, Section 17.48).

#### 561. Required Information

The following information is required on obstruction light outages:

- a. Height of the obstruction. (Use MSL when known).
- b. Location in nautical miles and 16 points of the compass from the nearest airport providing scheduled airline service.

#### 562. Lighting Aid Outages

Disseminate as NOTAMS the following outages that occur during the required illumination period:

- a. Approach light system.
- b. Sequenced flashing lights.
- c. Runway edge lights.
- d. In-runway centerline lights.
- e. In-runway (touch-down) zone lights.
- f. Runway end identifier lights.
- g. Obstruction light outages in proximity to the airport, or of a prominent obstruction where the outage would contribute to a hazardous condition.

NOTE. Determination of what constitutes a prominent obstruction is made locally after coordination with Flight Standards.

LIGHTING AID AIRADS

570. Conditions disseminated as AIRAD's

Disseminate as AIRAD's:

- a. New construction such as TV towers, tall buildings, stacks, etc., for which obstruction lighting is required or recommended.
- b. Obstruction light outages in proximity to an airport served by an ATCT. (Obstruction light meeting criteria as defined in 562.g. shall be NOTAMed during required illumination periods when the towers are not operating.)

APPLICABILITYREQUIREMENTS

	<u>A/C LENGTH</u>	<u>VEHICLE</u>	<u>AGENT &amp; ACTIVITY</u>
INDEX A	NOT MORE THAN 90 FT.*	(1)	500#DC OR 450#DC AND 50 GAL. AFFF. NOTE: UNSCHEDULED OPERATIONS ONLY INDEX A VEHICLE REQUIRED; INDEX B A/C WITH LESS THAN 5 DAILY DEPARTURES 500 GAL. WATER 300#DC.
INDEX B	MORE THAN 90 FT. BUT NOT MORE THAN 126 FT.	(2)	5 OR MORE DAILY DEPARTURES. INDEX A VEHICLE PLUS 1500 GAL. WATER EXCLUDING FOAM CONCENTRATE.
INDEX C	MORE THAN 126 FT. BUT NOT MORE THAN 160 FT.	(3)	5 OR MORE DAILY DEP. INDEX A VEHICLE PLUS (2) WITH TOTAL 3000 GAL. WATER EXCLUDING FOAM CONCENTRATE.
INDEX D	MORE THAN 160 FT. BUT NOT MORE THAN 200 FT.	(3)	5 OR MORE DAILY DEP. INDEX A VEHICLE PLUS (2) WITH TOTAL 4000 GAL. WATER EXCLUDING FOAM CONCENTRATE.
INDEX E	MORE THAN 200 FT.	(3)	5 OR MORE DAILY DEP. INDEX A VEHICLE PLUS (2) WITH TOTAL 6000 GAL. WATER EXCLUDING FOAM CONCENTRATE.

\* Also applicable to all airports receiving CAB-Certificated Air Carriers in scheduled or  
unscheduled operations with small aircraft; and unscheduled operations with large aircraft.

REPRESENTATIVE LISTING OF AIR CARRIER AIRCRAFT  
BY FIREFIGHTING AND RESCUE INDICIES  
AC 150/5210-12

<u>INDEX</u>	<u>MAKE AND MODEL</u>	<u>OVERALL LENGTH</u>
<b>A</b>		
Aircraft not more than 90 feet long. Also applicable to all airports receiving CAB-certificated air carriers in:	Douglas DC-3	64' 6"
	Grumman I	63' 9"
scheduled or unscheduled operations with small aircraft; and unscheduled operations with large aircraft.	Handley Page 137	47' 1"
	Jet Stream	
	Hawker Siddeley DH-125	47' 5"
	Lockheed (Jet Star)	
	L-1329	60' 5"
	Nord 262	63' 3"
	Convair 240,600	74' 8"
	" 440, 580, 640	81' 6"
	" 340	79' 2"
	Fairchild F-27 Series	77' 2"
	" FH-227 Series	83' 1"
	Grumman Gulfstream II	79' 11"
	Martin 404	74' 7"
	Nihon YS-11A	86' 3"
	Vickers (Viscount)	
	V745	81' 10"
	800	85' 8"
<b>B</b>		
Aircraft more than 90 and not more than 126 feet long.	BAC 1-11/200,400	92' 6"
	Boeing 737-100	94' 0"
	" 737-200	100' 0"
	Caravelle SE-210 VI	105' 0"
	" SE-210 XII	118' 10"
	Douglas DC-6A & 6B	105' 7"
	" DC-7 & 7B	108' 11"
	" DC-9-10 & 9-20	104' 5"
	" DC-7C	112' 3"
	" DC-9-40	125' 7"
	" DC-9-30	119' 4"
	Lockheed 049,649,749	95' 2"
	" 1049 Series	113' 7"
	" 188 Series (Electra)	104' 7"



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<u>INDEX</u>	<u>MAKE AND MODEL</u>	<u>OVERALL LENGTH</u>
<b>C</b>		
Aircraft more than 126 and not more than 160 feet long.	Boeing 707-100, 200	144' 6"
	" 707-300, 320	152' 11"
	" 720	136' 2"
	" 727-100	134' 4"
	" 727-200	153' 2"
	Convair 880	129' 4"
	" 990	139' 5"
	Douglas DC-8/10-50	
	Series	150' 5"
	" DC-8-62	157' 5"
	Tupolev TU-154	157' 2"
<b>D</b>		
Aircraft more than 160 and not more than 200 feet long.	Douglas DC-8-61 & 63	187' 5"
	" DC-10	181' 5"
	Lockheed L-1011	177' 8"
	Vickers VC-10 Super	171' 8"
<b>E</b>		
Aircraft more than 200 feet long.	Boeing 747	231' 10"
	Lockheed L-500 (C-5A)	247' 11"
	BAC/SUD Concorde	203' 9"

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