



PORT OF OAKLAND

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING WORKSHOP / MEETING Environmental Assessment for Runway Safety Area Improvement Project Oakland International Airport

The Port of Oakland is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate and disclose the potential environmental impacts associated with its proposal to make improvements to existing Runway Safety Areas (RSA) at Oakland International Airport (OAK). The EA will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and take into consideration requirements for environmental impact review and public disclosure pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions.

The RSA improvements are required to bring the RSAs into greater compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 5200.8, *Runway Safety Area Program*, and related FAA standards. This program is intended to provide an increased safety margin in the event that an aircraft deviates from the runway during an accident or emergency. Most of the existing RSAs at OAK do not meet the current prescribed FAA standards. Standards are based on the Aircraft Design Group for each runway.

The purpose of this notice is to advise government agencies and the public that a scoping workshop will be held to solicit input on environmental issues related to the proposed actions. All interested parties are invited to attend a public scoping workshop to provide comments and suggestions on the scope of the EA. Representatives from the Airport and its Consultant Team will be available to discuss the project. Details of the workshop are as follows:

Public Scoping Workshop
March 12, 2009
4:00 to 6:00 PM
Oakland International Airport, Terminal 1
2nd Floor, In-transit Lounge
Oakland, CA

Additional information can be found on the Port's website: www.portofoakland.com/enviro/m/
This meeting is wheelchair accessible. To request materials in alternative formats, or to request an ASL interpreter, or assistive listening device, please call Lawrence Sumpter at (510)-627-1643 or TDD/TTY 711 at least three working days before the meeting. Efforts will be made to accommodate special needs. Those who can not attend the workshop may submit written comments. See contact information below.

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There will be an additional opportunity to comment on the Runway Safety Area Improvement Project when the EA is circulated for public comment.



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Background

OAK is located adjacent to San Francisco Bay approximately 2 miles west of Interstate 880 in the City of Oakland, California. The City of Oakland is located in Alameda County, which is east of San Francisco County. The RSA improvement project involves the safety areas of Runways 11/29, 9R/27L, and 9L/27R.

RSAs are specified in FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5300-13, *Airport Design*, as a “defined surface surrounding the runway that is prepared or suitable for reducing the risk of damage to airplanes in the event of an undershoot, overshoot, or other excursion from the runway”. The FAA defines RSA dimensions for each runway category. The subject RSAs at OAK are required to be 500 feet wide and extend 1,000 feet beyond each runway end. According to FAA guidance, RSAs shall be:

1. Cleared and graded and have no potentially hazardous ruts, humps, depressions or other surface variations;
2. Drained by grading or storm sewers to prevent water accumulations;
3. Capable, under dry conditions, of supporting snow removal equipment, aircraft rescue and firefighting equipment, and the occasional passage of aircraft without causing structural damage to the aircraft; and
4. Free of objects, except for objects that need to be located in the runway safety area because of their function.

The existing RSAs for Runways 11/29, 9R/27L, and 9L/27R at OAK do not meet the current FAA standards. The most significant areas of non-compliance include: standing water due to insufficient drainage; uneven terrain due to uneven grading, soft soils and wetlands; and insufficient length of safety areas at the runway ends.

Purpose

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve safety at OAK by bringing the safety areas of Runways 11/29, 9R/27L, and 9L/27R into compliance with current FAA design standards to the greatest extent practicable. The FAA requires that commercial airports regulated under Part 139 (air carrier) safety rules meet RSA standards where possible. The FAA’s national undertaking is to complete all practicable RSA improvements by 2015.

The proposed RSA improvements are needed to meet the FAA guidance which includes reducing the risk of damage to aircraft that may undershoot, overrun, or veer off airport runways, thereby improving aircraft and passenger safety. The RSA improvements would also provide increased accessibility for firefighting and rescue equipment during emergency situations.



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Preferred Alternative

OAK has completed RSA planning studies that describe current conditions and identify non-standard RSA design features. The RSA planning studies also include an evaluation of a range of alternatives for bringing the RSAs into compliance with current FAA design standards and criteria. RSA alternatives were screened and a recommended Proposed Project Alternative has been chosen for each runway. The No Action Alternative will also be considered in the EA. The preferred alternative would not involve placing any fill in the bay.

The Proposed Project Alternative includes undertaking the following RSA improvements on existing airport property:

North Field:

- Grading and drainage improvements within the Runway 9L/27R RSA, which would allow for the RSA to be mostly compliant on both ends up to 1,000 feet long by 500 feet wide;
- Grading and drainage improvements within the Runway 9R/27L RSA, which would allow for the RSA to be 500 feet wide and compliant on the 27L end with a length of 1,000 feet long and bring the end of Runway 9R into greater compliance by establishing a 780-foot long RSA;
- Relocation (to the extent feasible) of an existing airfield service roadway that is currently located within the Runways 27L and 27R RSA; and
- Relocation of an existing airfield service roadway that is currently located within the Runway 9R RSA.

South Field:

- Grading and drainage improvements within the Runway 11/29 RSA, which would maintain the 10,000 feet long runway length and allow for the Runway 11 end to be RSA compliant with a dimension of 1,000 feet long by 500 feet wide; and
- Construction of a 480 feet long, non-standard installation of Engineering Materials Arresting System (EMAS) on the end of Runway 29. EMAS is a bed of lightweight crushable concrete that is intended to stop aircraft that have overshoot a runway when insufficient space is available for a standard RSA. EMAS allows the aircraft to decelerate at a safe rate by crushing specially designed concrete blocks.

EA Document

The EA will be based upon the RSA planning studies and recommended solutions to bring the North and South fields into FAA compliance to the greatest practicable extent while limiting negative environmental impacts. The EA will be prepared according to the guidance of FAA Order 1050.1E, Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures, FAA Order 5050.4B, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions, and the



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Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1509). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will also be considered in the evaluation; as the Port intends to later adopt the EA for CEQA purposes.

Intended Uses of the EA

The EA will be used to identify the potential environmental impacts of the proposed RSA improvements. Responsible agencies may use the EA as needed for their subsequent discretionary actions and the EA will serve as an information document for the general public.

This notice and other Runway Area Safety Improvement Project materials may be viewed online at <http://www.portofoakland.com/enviroonm/>