



PLANE TALK

Publication of Statewide Aviation



WINTER 2020

WELCOME TO DILLINGHAM Horizon Air!



| TRAVEL TIPS

| FAA AIRPORTS ALLY AWARD

| DOCUSERIES

Message from DC Binder:



The Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport remains a bright spot for our state with cargo activity soaring and increased interest in cargo developments. More than \$500 million in private cargo expansion and development projects are on the horizon with Alaska Cargo & Cold Storage, 6A Aviation, FedEx, and UPS having all put forward plans at the world's sixth busiest cargo airport. Up north at the Fairbanks Airport construction continues with Omni Logistics, Inc building a new hangar able to handle any narrow-body aircraft, and LifeMed Alaska breaking ground on a new air ambulance hangar.

And after what has seemed like eternity it is great news that communities across the state are once again connected with passenger air service. Ravn Alaska has resumed flying to Unalaska, Valdez, Kenai, Sand Point, and Homer. DOT&PF operates all but the Kenai Airport and our airport crews have been readying for large aircraft to return to these busy hub airports. A welcome return to Alaska is Horizon Air now offering jet service to King Salmon, Dillingham, and Fairbanks in the Embraer 175 that features 76 wide, comfortable seats.

I'd like to add my congratulations to Tom George for the well-deserved FAA Airport Ally Award he received. Tom has been a tremendous advocate for Alaskan airports and aviation investing countless time and effort into improving what is not only a tremendous

pastime in Alaska, but also an essential lifeline to so many of our communities. From airspace development, to weather system advocacy, to communication coordination, Tom has been right in the middle of it all helping to plot a successful path forward. Congratulations Tom!

I hope you get a chance to watch the docuseries Extreme Ice Machines and Ice Airport Alaska featuring FAI and ANC. Besides starring in an Extreme Ice Machines episode, John Frison was presented the [NASA award](#) for most innovative state award for his design of the "Yeti". And hats off to ANC for proudly maintaining "never having to close for snow" status!

As we head into the holidays, I want to thank you for all you do to contribute to Alaska's aviation system. This has certainly been a challenging year, and the entire team of airlines, tenants, customers, and airport staff have been key to maintaining the connectivity necessary to Keep Alaska Moving. I wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Fly Safe,

John Binder
Deputy Commissioner



**Ravn Alaska's first flight back into Unalaska.
Photo Credit - Airport Manager Dale Ruckman**

**Cover Photo Credit:
Jon Taylor, Dillingham Airport Manager**

FAA Airports Ally Award



Tom George
at the Great Alaska Aviation Gathering

FAA Airports Ally Award

Submitted by Kristi A. Warden

Director, FAA Alaskan Region Airports Division

Tom George was presented the FAA Office of Airports, Airports Ally Award, for outstanding leadership, unsurpassed initiative, value-added collaboration, and significant contribution via advocacy to the Federal Aviation Administration, specifically the Office of Airports, and to general aviation throughout Alaska. He also is recognized for project and program assistance and advocacy with – and directly benefitting – the Alaskan Region Airports Division Office. Tom's influential scope is extraordinarily wide-reaching and, indeed, a number of the FAA's Alaskan Region initiatives have been directly and favorably impacted and facilitated by his professionalism and efforts.

Mr. George serves as a Regional Manager for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), working with government agencies and industry groups to promote general aviation on behalf of AOPA members in Alaska. Alaska is the largest state in the United States, the most geographically-challenged, and one which hosts, arguably, the most culturally-diverse population with the greatest aviation transportation needs due to lack of available surface transportation (road) access.

Tom serves as an advocate for the State's largest contingent of flying aircraft and aviators which constitutes one of the only means of

transportation – an essential transportation link – to the majority of communities in the State.

Some of his specific leadership initiatives in the nomination include:

- Serving as a member of the Alaska Aviation Advisory Board, leading collaborative communications between the Board and the FAA/Alaskan Region Airports Division; this is particularly impactful since the Board represents the largest airport sponsor in the State;
- Collaborating with the Alaskan Region Airports Division Office by serving as an essential and effective communications liaison with general aviation airport tenants and users owned and operated by the largest airport sponsor in the State;
- Leading a significant effort, on behalf of the Aviation Advisory Board, to socialize the statewide general aviation contingent to proposed aircraft registration fees (an important component of airport user rates and charges) – fully consistent with FAA Office of Airports Grant Assurances;
- Providing outstanding project/program external leadership and assistance to the Region Office for the FAA's private-use airport inventory project by communicating directly with prospectively impacted private-use airport owners and assisting them hands-on in reaching out to the Alaskan Region Airports Division Office subject matter expert point of contact;
- Leading a statewide general aviation pilot education/safety project initiative to mark gravel runways to serve as practice landing strips for remote, unimproved, and short gravel and grass runways typically found in remote areas of the State.

The Alaskan Region Airports Division Office leadership is grateful for Tom's extraordinarily value-added contributions to general aviation, the FAA, and to its Office. His work matters and makes all the difference in enabling the Region Office to effectively and efficiently reach out to the statewide general aviation contingent.

Alaska Docuseries - Featuring FAI & ANC



"Maintaining our runway and keeping this airport open - there is not an option for failure," says John Frison. John designed and built the one-of-kind, extreme ice machine "Yeti" and is an airfield maintenance operator at the Fairbanks International Airport (FAI).

In the recently released docuseries, *EXTREME ICE MACHINES*, audiences meet the humans and machines that tackle the world's iciest terrain, offering a first-hand look at the sub-zero action. From living among polar bears, to servicing the world's northern most airport, the incredible engineers behind these innovative machines break down these groundbreaking inventions and prove how they help us to survive in conditions that could otherwise be deadly.

"Innovative, inventive, groundbreaking are all words that come to mind when describing FAI's Yeti inventor, Johnny Frison, said Airport Manager Angie Spear. We are so proud and thankful for the FAI maintenance crew featured in this episode as well as all of our employees who keep the airport open, safe and operational every day, regardless of weather conditions."

Watch Extreme Ice Machines - Season 1 Episode 6 - ***Beast in the Snow***.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HjpHsOjKQAU&feature=youtu.be>



See how the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport keeps the 6th busiest cargo hub in the world, open 24/7 never having closed due to snow!

Ice Airport Alaska provides exclusive access inside ANC, which serves as one of the world's busiest cargo airports and is located 9.5 flying hours from 90% of the industrialized world. Exclusive access has also been granted to Alaska Airlines, U.S. Customs and Border, TSA, as well as airport police and contractors.

Ice Airport Alaska chronicles the daily challenges of the airport staff who manage to keep the facility open, freight flowing and passengers flying all despite the extreme weather challenges.

For more information visit:
visiting: bit.ly/3hTULaR
Smithsonian Channel

ANC Airfield Facts:

- Average annual snow fall is 69.5 inches. Since 2005 annual snow fall has ranged from 60 inches to 135 inches.
- Airfield Electricians maintain 6,516 runway and taxiway lighting fixtures, 232 airfield signs, and 1,206 elevated street, parking, and facility lights.

SECURITY SPOTLIGHT

By Jeremy Worrall

DOT&PF Maintenance & Operations Superintendent

Airport security is a constant part of every day for those working at the DOT&PF Category III airports around Alaska. Security training at these airports is mandatory and repeatedly focuses on concepts like reporting suspicious activity and the fact that each person on the airport has a role in keeping the airport secure.

Another topic that is covered within this training is ensuring that access points to the airport remain secure and individual responsibility for each door or gate that a person opens. While the training covers these items in detail some of these concepts can be forgotten over time in the course of busy stressful days at the airport. Airport security training uses the phrase "wait for the gate" to help individuals remember that they have to maintain control over a gate they open and ensure that the gate is closed securely. Unfortunately there isn't a catchy phrase to easily remind us that we need to do the same thing at doors to restricted areas; secure the door just doesn't have the same ring as wait for the gate. Maybe be sure it's secure? At any rate and even without a catchy reminder it is critical that everyone working at the airport double checks that doors lock securely behind them every time. Failure to secure a door is an airport security violation and a violation of TSA regulations that can have severe consequences including mandatory retraining, suspension of an airport ID badge, investigations by TSA, permanent revocation of an airport ID badge, and even civil or criminal liability and monetary fines. At worst failing to secure a door could allow an unauthorized person to gain access with nefarious intent.

Security at the airport is a community effort as well as an individual effort and it is imperative that everyone at the airport maintain a security mindset even as they go about their daily work routine at the airport.



HOLIDAY TRAVEL TIPS

During a pandemic

Holiday travel looks a lot different this year. If you are traveling, Alaska's International Airports - ANC and FAI are offering the following tips to help your travel plans go more smoothly.

Follow the rules:

Familiarize yourself with your destination's state and local guidelines.

- If there's a mask mandate, wear your mask.
- If social distancing is required, stay at least six feet from others.
- Some destinations may require a travel declaration. All travelers arriving in Alaska must complete one and upload it to the online Travel Portal at covid19.alaska.gov/travelers
- Pretravel testing is a good idea and may be required. Non-residents traveling to Alaska must complete a pretravel test within 72 hour of departure or test upon arrival in Alaska for \$250.

Safety en route:

- Carry several masks with you in case of loss or need to replace.
- Review the rules that are specific to your airline. Keep in mind that you may have booked with one airline but are flying on one of their travel partners and they may have different rules.
- Bring sanitizing wipes/spray to clean seating and other surfaces.
- Bring hand sanitizer with you. TSA is allowing up to 12 ounces of hand sanitizer in your carry-on. The 3-1-1 rule still applies for all other liquids, gels and pastes:

Each container must be 3.4 ounces or less.
All containers must be in a clear, one-quart size bag.
Only one quart-size bag per passenger.

Consider buying travel insurance. If you contract COVID-19 while traveling, you may not be able to return home until you have recovered, or you may need cancel your trip before you leave.

For more information, visit www.TSA.gov before you travel.

For information about returning to Alaska, visit www.AlaskaSafeTravels.com.

Airport news

ANC Air Cargo Numbers Continue to Soar in Third Quarter

Nearly 1 million tons of cargo passed through Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (ANC) in the third quarter this year, a 25 percent increase in cargo tonnage compared to the same quarter of last year. As of the end of September, 2.5 million tons of cargo has touched down at ANC this year, a 13.6 percent increase over first nine months of 2019.

In the first quarter of 2020 ANC was the 38th busiest airport in the U.S based on aircraft operations. By the second quarter, ANC had climbed to third. Strong cargo traffic continued in the third quarter and ANC remained in the top 10 as the eighth busiest airport.

"The pandemic has caused a significant shift in the air traffic mix. Nominal amounts of passenger aircraft are flying, displacing the cargo they once carried in their bellies. It has created considerable demand for freighter space to carry that cargo," said ANC Airport Director Jim Szczesniak. "This demand for moving cargo displaced by the decrease in passenger aircraft availability is further bolstered by a substantial increase in e-commerce as people across the globe have embraced online shopping throughout the pandemic. The shift in the movement of air cargo has highlighted ANC's efficiencies and significance as the Center of the Air Cargo World."

Lake Hood is Open for Winter Operations

Winter operations are in effect, and the airport is reminding all to please stay off the ice. The frozen lakes remain restricted active runway surfaces all winter for ski operations.

Information on Lake Hood and Spenard grooming and ice conditions is available here:

<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/anc/business/generalAviation/iceConditions.shtml>

For further information please contact the Lake Hood Office at 907-266-2410.



Over the past ten years the Alaska Aviation System Plan (AASP) continues to develop, grow and complete a variety of different tasks, including area plans and special studies, creation and expansion of a one-stop aviation database, and implementation of new processes such as the digital APEB project priority process and the Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) inspections.

Phase III of the plan kicked off in July of 2020, with a survey conducted this fall to help prioritize Alaska aviation system planning tasks over the next five years. The survey contained questions for DOT&PF staff as well as the FAA, aviation user groups, other airport sponsors, the Aviation Advisory Board and aviation consultants. Respondents indicated the top aviation issues facing Alaska today relate to airport funding, lack of weather reporting statewide, and fleet analysis and forecasting for the future.

The AASP website is continually updated with new information and database connections. Airport contacts are now available under each facility, as well as other airport data, pavement information, facility photos and documents. If you can't find information you are seeking, please reach out to the AASP team and we will try to help! Another future task within Phase III includes creating new data connections with other State of Alaska systems, such as the project Management Reporting System (MRS), Maintenance Management System (MMS) and the Equipment Management System (EMS), to provide better opportunity to access airport information.

If you haven't taken advantage of the Alaska Aviation System Plan website and its information yet, check it out at <https://www.alaskaasp.com/>. For access to the internal side of the website, contact statewideaviation@alaska.gov.

Klawock Airport Wildlife Hazard Assessment

The Klawock Airport (AKW) saw 23 bird strikes in the past ten years! Scott Van Valin, of Alaska Island Air Express, operates at AKW and requested DOT&PF address the wildlife hazards at the Klawock Airport. USDA Wildlife Services recommended DOT&PF initiate a 12-month Wildlife Hazard Assessment (WHA) for the airfield and surrounding area. The assessment will provide valuable insights into wildlife densities, distribution, and behavior at Klawock, which are essential to develop effective mitigation strategies to reduce wildlife hazards and improve safety at the Klawock Airport.

The assessment will answer questions such as:

- What is the nesting activity on and near the airfield, and by which species?
- Why have goose and eagle threats increased over the past decade?
- Is there a resident goose population near the airport, and if so what can be done about it?
- Is the migration window at the Klawock Airport increasing?
- What resident wildlife populations exist on and around the airport?

These questions and more will be addressed by the twelve month intensive WHA providing the necessary information to develop a management plan that will address the unique needs of the Klawock Airport. The WHA at Klawock Airport will run through October of 2021. FAA Alaskan Region Airports Division agreed to fund the assessment through an Airport Improvement Program planning grant.

DOT&PF awarded the contract to Loomacres Wildlife Management to conduct the assessment. They started November 1st with the majority of the tasks to date focused on project setup, study design, stakeholder outreach and data collection. Airport Biologist Crystal Alexander visits the airport daily to conduct surveys and wildlife mitigation research. Field work for the project will last until the fall of next year, with a goal of providing the most suitable approach for the airport to maintain a reduced level of wildlife hazards. For more information contact:

Onsite Airport Biologist: Crystal Alexander,
CAlexander@loomacres.com, 907-220-4807
Project Manager: Cody Baciuska,
Cody@loomacres.com, 607-760-8748

PFAS (Perfluoroalkyl Substances) Update

PFAS chemicals are used in a variety of products including firefighting foams called aqueous film forming foams (AFFF), used to extinguish fuel and chemical fires. AFFF is a common source of environmental PFAS contamination, particularly near airports where AFFF is discharged during firefighting activities and can eventually migrate into the groundwater, contaminating nearby drinking water supplies. DOT&PF currently has active PFAS investigations at airports throughout the state. While COVID-19 delayed efforts this spring, DOT&PF staff and contractors adapted and implemented mitigation efforts to continue work both on airport property and for private well testing by mid-summer.

In Fairbanks construction has concluded which involved connecting the remaining impacted well owners to College Utilities, dewatering the fire training pit, applying top soil and hydro-seed, as well as installing jersey barriers. In Gustavus, planning and construction began to design, build and install rain catchment systems at impacted well locations both on and off airport property. Exploratory drilling also took place to identify an alternate water source for community members to utilize during years that do not produce enough rain. Shannon & Wilson also performed site characterization efforts near an aviation crash site in Bethel and conducted well search and site characterization activities in Nome. Ongoing water supply well monitoring took place at all DOT&PF active sites and locations where monitoring wells have been installed were sampled too. More information at this link:
<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/airportwater/>



Shannon & Wilson obtaining a surface water sample at the Nome Airport this fall.



*Alaska CargoPort in the foreground with UPS and FedEx midframe and Romeo Ramp to the south.
Photo by Rob Stapleton/Alaskafoto*



Our mission is to:

***"Keep Alaska Moving through
service and infrastructure."***

***To learn more visit our website:
dot.alaska.gov***

